CHRONICLES

OF

THE CANONGATE.

Second Series.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "WAVERLEY," &c.

SIC ITUR AD ASTRA.

Motto of the Canongate Arms.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED FOR CADELL AND CO., EDINBURGH;

AND SIMPKIN AND MARSHALL, LONDON.

1828.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY BALLANTYNE AND CO.

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CHAPTER I.

The ashes here of murder'd Kings
Beneath my footsteps sleep;
And yonder lies the scene of death,
Where Mary learn'd to weep.

CAPTAIN MARJORIBANKS.

EVERY quarter of Edinburgh has its own peculiar boast, so that the city together combines within its precincts, (if you take the word of the inhabitants on the subject,) as much variety as beauty, as much of historical interest as of natural sublimity. Our claims in behalf of the Canongate are not the slightest or least in-

teresting. The Castle may excel us in extent of prospect and natural sublimity of site; the Calton had always the superiority of its unrivalled panorama, and has of late added to them that of its towers, bridges, and triumphal arches. The High Street, we acknowledge, had the distinguished honour of being defended by fortifications, of which we can show no vestiges. We will not descend to notice the claims of mere upstart districts, called Old New Town and New New Town, not to mention the favourite Moray Place, which is the newest New Town of all. We will not match ourselves except with our equals, and with our equals in age only, for in dignity we admit of none. We boast being the Court end of the town, possessing the Palace and the sepulchral remains of ancient Monarchs, and that we have the power to excite, in a degree unknown to the less honoured quarters of the city, the dark and solemn recollections of the ancient grandeur, which occupied the precincts of our venerable Abbey from the time of St David, till her deserted halls were once more

made glad, and her long silent echoes awakened, by the visit of our present gracious Sovereign.

My long habitation in the neighbourhood, and the quiet respectability of my habits, have given me a sort of intimacy with good Mrs ——, the housekeeper in that most interesting part of the old building, called Queen Mary's Apartments. But a circumstance which lately happened has conferred upon me greater privileges; so that, indeed, I might, I believe, venture on the exploit of Chatelet, who was executed for being found secreted at midnight in the very bedchamber of Scotland's Mistress.

It chanced, that the good lady I have mentioned, was, in the discharge of her function, showing the apartments to a cockney from London;—not one of your quiet, dull, common-place visitors, who gape, yawn, and listen with an acquiescent *umph*, to the information doled out by the provincial cicerone. No such thing—this was the brisk, alert agent of a great house in the city, who missed no opportunity of doing business, as he termed it, that is, of putting off the goods

of his emp oyers, and improving his own account of commission. He had fidgeted through the suite of apartments, without finding the least opportunity to touch upon that which he considered as the principal end of his existence. Even the story of Rizzio's assassination presented no ideas to this emissary of commerce, until the housekeeper appealed, in support of her narrative, to the dusky stains of blood upon the floor.

"These are the stains," she said; "nothing will remove them from the place—there they have been for two hundred and fifty years—and there they will remain while the floor is left standing—neither water nor anything else will ever remove them from that spot."

Now, our cockney, amongst other articles, sold Scouring Drops, as they are called, and a stain of two hundred and fifty years standing was interesting to him, not because it had been caused by the blood of a Queen's favourite, slain in her apartment, but because it offered so admirable an opportunity to prove the efficacy of his unequalled Detergent Elixir. Down

on his knees went our friend, but neither in horror nor devotion.

"Two hundred and fifty years, ma'am, and nothing take it away? Why, if it had been five hundred, I have something in my pocket will fetch it out in five minutes. D'ye see this elixir, ma'am? I will show you the stain vanish in a moment."

Accordingly, wetting one end of his handkerchief with the all-deterging specific, he began to rub away on the planks, without heeding the remonstrances of Mrs ——. She, good soul, stood at first in astonishment, like the Abbess of St Bridget's, when a profane visitant drank up the vial of brandy which had long passed muster among the relics of the cloister for the tears of the blessed saint. The venerable guardian of St Bridget probably expected the interference of her patroness—She of Holy Rood might, perhaps, hope that David Rizzio's spectre would arise to prevent the profanation. But Mrs —— stood not long in the silence of horror. She uplifted her voice, and screamed as loudly as Queen Mary herself,

when the dreadful deed was in the act of perpetration—

"Harrow now out! and walawa!" she cried.

I happened to be taking my morning walk in the adjoining gallery, pondering in my mind why the Kings of Scotland, who hung around me, should be each and every one painted with a nose like the knocker of a door, when lo! the walls once more re-echoed with such shrieks, as formerly were as often heard in the Scottish palaces as were sounds of revelry and music. Somewhat surprised at such an alarm in a place so solitary, I hastened to the spot, and found the well-meaning traveller scrubbing the floor like a housemaid, while Mrs ——, dragging him by the skirts of the coat, in vain endeavoured to divert him from his sacrilegious purpose. It cost me some trouble to explain to the zealous purifier of silk-stockings, embroidered waistcoats, broad-cloth, and deal planks, that there were such things in the world as stains which ought to remain indelible, on account of the associations with which they are con-

nected. Our good friend viewed everything of the kind only as the means of displaying the virtue of his vaunted commodity. He comprehended, however, that he would not be permitted to proceed to exemplify its powers on the present occasion, so took his leave, muttering that he had always heard the Scots were a nasty people, but had no idea they carried it so far as to choose to have the floors of their palaces blood-boltered, like Banquo's ghost, when to remove them would have cost but a hundred drops of the Infallible Detergent Elixir, prepared and sold by Messrs Scrub and Rub, in five shilling and ten shilling bottles, each bottle being marked with the initials of the inventor, to counterfeit which would be to incur the pains of forgery.

Freed from the odious presence of this lover of cleanliness, my good friend Mrs —— was profuse in her expressions of thanks; and yet her gratitude, instead of exhausting itself in these declarations, according to the way of the world, continues as lively at this moment as if she had never thanked me at all. It is

owing to her recollection of this piece of good service, that I have the permission of wandering, like the ghost of some departed gentleman-usher, through these deserted halls, sometimes, as the old Irish ditty expresses it,

Thinking on things that are long enough ago;

and sometimes wishing I could, with the good luck of most editors of romantic narrative, light upon some hidden crypt or massive antique cabinet, which should yield to my researches an almost illegible manuscript, containing the authentic particulars of some of the strange deeds of those wild days of the unhappy Mary.

My dear Mrs Baliol used to sympathize with me when I regretted that all the Godsends of this nature had ceased to occur, and that an author might chatter his teeth to pieces by the seaside, without a wave ever wafting to him a casket containing such a history as that of Automathes; that he might break his shins in stumbling through a hundred vaults, without finding anything but rats and mice, and become

the tenant of a dozen sets of shabby tenements, without seeing any manuscript but the weekly bill for board and lodging. A dairy-maid of these degenerate days might as well wash and deck her dairy in hopes of finding the fairy tester in her shoe.

"It is a sad, and too true a tale, cousin," said Mrs Baliol. "I am sure we all have occasion to regret the want of these ready supplements to a failing invention. But you, most of all, have right to complain that the fairies have not favoured your researches—you who have shown the world that the Age of Chivalry still exists—you, the Knight of Croftangry, who braved the fury of the 'London 'prentice bold,' in behalf of the fair Dame ——, and the memorial of Rizzio's slaughter. Is it not a pity, cousin, considering the feat of chivalry was otherwise so much according to rule—is it not, I say, a great pity that the lady had not been a little younger, and the legend a little older?"

"Why, as to the age at which a fair dame loses the benefits of chivalry, and is no longer entitled to crave boon of brave knight, that I

leave to the statutes of the Order of Errantry; but for the blood of Rizzio, I take up the gauntlet, and maintain against all and sundry, that I hold the stains to be of no modern date, but to have been actually the consequence and the record of that terrible assassination."

"As I cannot accept the challenge to the field, fair cousin, I am contented to require proof."

"The unaltered tradition of the Palace, and the correspondence of the existing state of things with that tradition."

"Explain, if you please."

"I will.—The universal tradition bears, that when Rizzio was dragged out of the chamber of the Queen, the heat and fury of the assassins, who struggled which should deal him most wounds, dispatched him at the door of the anteroom. There, therefore, the greater quantity of the blood was spilled, and there the marks of it are still shown. It is reported further by historians, that Mary continued her entreaties for his life, mingling her prayers with screams and exclamations, until she knew that he was assu-

redly slain; on which she wiped her eyes and said, 'I will now study revenge.'"

"All this is granted.—But the blood? would it not wash out, or waste out, think you, in so many years?"

"I am coming to that presently. The constant tradition of the Palace says, that Mary discharged any measures to be taken to remove the marks of slaughter, which she had resolved should remain as a memorial to quicken and confirm her purposed vengeance. But it is added, that, satisfied with the knowledge that it existed, and not desirous to have the ghastly evidence always under her eye, she caused a traverse, as it is called, (that is, a temporary screen of boards,) to be drawn along the under part of the anteroom, a few feet from the door, so as to separate the place stained with the blood from the rest of the apartment, and involve it in considerable obscurity. Now this temporary partition still exists, and by running across and interrupting the plan of the roof and cornices, plainly intimates that it has been intended to serve some temporary

purpose, since it disfigures the proportions of the room, interferes with the ornaments of the ceiling, and could only have been put there for some such purpose, as hiding an object too disagreeable to be looked upon. As to the objection that the blood-stains would have disappeared in course of time, I apprehend that if measures to efface them were not taken immediately after the affair happened—if the blood, in other words, were allowed to sink into the wood, the stain would become almost indelible. Now, not to mention that our Scottish palaces were not particularly well washed in those days, and that there were no Patent Drops to assist the labours of the mop, I think it very probable that these dark relics might subsist for a long course of time, even if Mary had not desired or directed that they should be preserved, but screened by the traverse from public sight. I know several instances of similar blood-stains remaining for a great many years, and I doubt whether, after a certain time, anything can remove them, save the carpenter's plane. If any Seneschal, by way of increasing the interest of the

apartments, had, by means of paint, or any other mode of imitation, endeavoured to palm upon posterity supposititious stigmata, I conceive that the impostor would have chosen the Queen's cabinet and the bedroom for the scene of his trick, placing his bloody tracery where it could be distinctly seen by visitors, instead of hiding it behind the traverse in this manner. The existence of the said traverse, or temporary partition, is also extremely difficult to be accounted for, if the common and ordinary tradition be rejected. In short, all the rest of this striking locality is so true to the historical fact, that I think it may well bear out the additional circumstance of the blood on the floor."

"I profess to you," answered Mrs Baliol, "that I am very willing to be converted to your faith. We talk of a credulous vulgar, without always recollecting that there is a vulgar incredulity, which, in historical matters, as well as in those of religion, finds it easier to doubt than to examine, and endeavours to assume the credit of an *esprit fort*, by denying

whatever happens to be a little beyond the very limited comprehension of the sceptic.—And so, that point being settled, and you possessing, as we understand, the Open Sesamum into these secret apartments, how, if we may ask, do you intend to avail yourself of your privilege?—Do you propose to pass the night in the royal bedchamber?"

"For what purpose, my dear lady?—if to improve the rheumatism, this east wind may serve the purpose."

"Improve the rheumatism—Heaven forbid! that would be worse than adding colours to the violet. No, I mean to recommend a night on the couch of the Rose of Scotland, merely to improve the imagination. Who knows what dreams might be produced by a night spent in a mansion of so many memories! For aught I know, the iron door of the postern stair might open at the dead hour of midnight, and, as at the time of the conspiracy, forth might sally the phantom assassins, with stealthy step and ghastly look, to renew the semblance of the deed. There comes the fierce fanatic Ruthven—party

hatred enabling him to bear the armour which would otherwise weigh down a form extenuated by wasting disease. See how his writhen features show under the hollow helmet, like those of a corpse tenanted by a demon, whose vindictive purpose looks out at the flashing eyes, while the visage has the stillness of death.—Yonder appears the tall form of the boy Darnley, as goodly in person as vacillating in resolution; yonder he advances with hesitating step, and yet more hesitating purpose, his childish fear having already overcome his childish passion. He is in the plight of a mischievous boy who has fired a mine, and who now, expecting the explosion in remorse and terror, would give his life to quench the train which his own hand lighted.—Yonder—yonder—But I forget the rest of the worthy cut-throats. Help me, if you can."

"Summon up," said I, "the Postulate, George Douglas, the most active of the gang. Let him arise at your call—the claimant of wealth which he does not possess—the partaker of the illustrious blood of Douglas, but which

in his veins is sullied with illegitimacy. Paint him the ruthless, the daring, the ambitious—so nigh greatness, yet debarred from it—so near to wealth, yet excluded from possessing it—a political Tantalus, ready to do or dare anything to terminate his necessities and assert his imperfect claims."

"Admirable, my dear Croftangry! But what is a Postulate?"

"Pooh, my dear madam, you disturb the current of my ideas—The Postulate was, in Scottish phrase, the candidate for some benefice which he had not yet attained—George Douglas, who stabbed Rizzio, was the Postulate for the temporal possessions of the rich Abbey of Arbroath."

"I stand informed—Come, proceed; who comes next?"

"Who comes next? Yon tall, thin-made, savage-looking man, with the petronel in his hand, must be Andrew Ker of Faldonside, a brother's son, I believe, of the celebrated Sir David Ker of Cessford; his look and bearing those of a Border freebooter; his disposition so savage,

that, during the fray in the cabinet, he presented his loaded piece at the bosom of the young and beautiful Queen, that Queen also being within a few weeks of becoming a mother."

"Bravo, *beau cousin!*—Well, having raised your bevy of phantoms, I hope you do not intend to send them back to their cold beds to warm them? You will put them to some action, and since you do threaten the Canongate with your desperate quill, you surely mean to novelize, or to dramatize if you will, this most singular of all tragedies?"

"Worse—that is less interesting periods of history have been, indeed, shown up, for furnishing amusement to the peaceable ages which have succeeded; but, dear lady, the events are too well known in Mary's days, to be used as vehicles of romantic fiction. What can a better writer than myself add to the elegant and forcible narrative of Robertson? So adieu to my vision—I awake, like John Bunyan, and behold it is a dream.—Well, enough that I awake without a sciatica, which would have probably rewarded my slumbers had I profaned Queen

Mary's bed, by using it as a mechanical resource to awaken a torpid imagination."

"This will never do, cousin," answered Mrs Baliol; "you must get over all these scruples, if you would thrive in the character of a romantic historian, which you have determined to embrace. What is the classic Robertson to you? The light which he carried was that of a lamp to illuminate the dark events of antiquity; yours is a magic lantern to raise up wonders which never existed. No reader of sense wonders at your historical inaccuracies, any more than he does to see Punch in the show-box seated on the same throne with King Solomon in his glory, or to hear him hallowing out tothe patriarch, amid the deluge, 'Mighty hazy weather, Master Noah.'"

"Do not mistake me, my dear madam," said I; "I am quite conscious of my own immunities as a tale-teller. But even the mendacious Mr Fagg assures us, that though he never scruples to tell a lie at his master's command, yet it hurts his conscience to be found out. Now, this is the reason why I avoid in prudence all

well-known paths of history, where every one can read the finger-posts carefully set up to advise them of the right turning; and the very boys and girls, who learn the history of Britain by way of question and answer, hoot at a poor author if he abandons the highway."

"Do not be discouraged, however, Cousin Chrystal. There are plenty of wildernesses in Scottish history, through which, unless I am greatly misinformed, no certain paths have been laid down from actual survey, but which are only described by imperfect tradition, which fills up with wonders and with legends the periods in which no real events are recognized to have taken place. Even thus, as Mat Prior says—

> 'Geographers on pathless downs,
> Place elephants for want of towns.'"

"If such be your advice, my dear lady," said I, "the course of my story shall take its rise upon this occasion at a remote period of history, and in a province removed from my natural sphere of the Canongate."

It was under the influence of those feelings that I undertook the following Historical Romance, which, often suspended and flung aside, is now arrived at a size too important to be altogether thrown away, although there may be little prudence in sending it to the press.

I have not placed in the mouth of the characters the Lowland Scotch dialect now spoken, because unquestionably the Scottish of that day resembled very closely the Anglo-Saxon, with a sprinkling of French or Norman to enrich it. Those who wish to investigate the subject, may consult the Chronicles of Winton, and the History of Bruce, by Archdeacon Barbour. But supposing my own skill in the ancient Scottish were sufficient to invest the dialogue with its peculiarities, a translation must have been necessary for the benefit of the general reader. The Scottish dialect may be therefore considered as laid aside, unless where the use of peculiar words may add emphasis or vivacity to the composition.

Saint Valentine's Day;

OR,

THE FAIR MAID OF PERTH.

CHAPTER I.

"Behold the Tiber," the vain Roman cried,
Viewing the ample Tay from Beglie's side;
But where's the Scot that would the vaunt repay,
And hail the puny Tiber for the Tay?

Among all the provinces in Scotland, if an intelligent stranger were asked to describe the most varied and the most beautiful, it is probable he would name the county of Perth. A native also of any other district, though his partialities might lead him to prefer his native county in the first instance, would certainly class that of Perth in the second, and thus give its inhabitants a fair right to plead that—pre-

judice apart—Perthshire forms the fairest portion of Caledonia. It is long since Lady Mary Wortley Montague, with that excellent taste which characterises her writings, expressed her opinion that the most interesting portion of every country, and that which exhibits the varied beauties of natural scenery in greatest perfection, is that where the mountains sink down upon the champaign, or more level land. The most picturesque, if not the highest hills, are to be found there. The rivers find their way out of the mountainous region by the wildest leaps, and through the most romantic passes. Above, the vegetation of a happier climate and soil, is mingled with the magnificent characteristics of mountain-scenery, and woods, groves, and thickets in profusion, clothe the base of the hills, ascend up the ravines, and mingle with the precipices. It is in such favoured regions that the traveller finds what the poet Gray, or some one else, has termed, Beauty lying in the lap of Terror.

From the same advantage of situation, this

favoured province presents a variety of the most pleasing character. Its lakes, woods, and mountains, may vie in beauty with any that the Highland tour exhibits; while Perthshire contains, amidst this romantic scenery, and in some places in connexion with it, many fertile and habitable tracts, which may vie with the richness of merry England herself. The country has also been the scene of many remarkable exploits and events, some of historical importance, others interesting to the poet and romancer, though recorded in popular tradition alone. It was in these vales that the Saxons of the plain, and the Gael of the mountains, had many a desperate and bloody encounter, in which it was frequently impossible to decide the palm of victory between the mailed chivalry of the Low Country, and the plaided clans whom they opposed.

Perth, so eminent for the beauty of its situation, is a place of great antiquity; and old tradition assigns to the town the importance of a Roman foundation. That victorious nation, it is said, pretended to recognize the Tiber in the

much more magnificent and navigable Tay, and to acknowledge the large level space, well known by the name of the North Inch, as having a near resemblance to their Campus Martius. The city was often the residence of our monarchs, who, although they had no palace at Perth, found the Cistercian Convent amply sufficient for the reception of their court. It was here that James the First, one of the wisest and best of the Scottish kings, fell a victim to the jealousy of the vengeful aristocracy. Here also occurred the mysterious conspiracy of Gowrie, the scene of which has only of late been effaced, by the destruction of the ancient palace in which the tragedy was acted. The Antiquarian Society of Perth, with just zeal for the objects of their pursuit, have published an accurate plan of this memorable mansion, with some remarks upon its connexion with the narrative of the plot, which display equal acuteness and candour.

One of the most beautiful points of view which Britain, or perhaps the world, can afford, is, or rather we may say was, the prospect from

a spot called the Wicks of Beglie, being a species of niche at which the traveller arrived, after a long stage from Kinross, through a waste and uninteresting country, and from which, as forming a pass over the summit of a ridgy eminence which he had gradually surmounted, he beheld, stretching beneath him, the valley of the Tay, traversed by its ample and lordly stream; the town of Perth, with its two large meadows, or Inches, its steeples, and its towers; the hills of Moncrieff and Kinnoul faintly rising into picturesque rocks, partly clothed with woods; the rich margin of the river, studded with elegant mansions; and the distant view of the huge Grampian mountains, the northern screen of this exquisite landscape. The alteration of the road, greatly, it must be owned, to the improvement of general intercourse, avoids this magnificent point of view, and the landscape is introduced more gradually and partially to the eye, though the approach must be still considered as extremely beautiful. There is still, we believe, a foot-path left open, by which the station at the Wicks of

Beglie may be approached; and the traveller, by quitting his horse or equipage, and walking a few hundred yards, may still compare the real landscape with the sketch which we have attempted to give. But it is not in our power to communicate, or in his to receive, the exquisite charm which surprise gives to pleasure, when so splendid a view arises when least expected or hoped for, and which Chrystal Croftangry experienced when he beheld, for the first time, the matchless scene.

Childish wonder, indeed, was an ingredient in my delight, for I was not above fifteen years old; and as this had been the first excursion which I was permitted to make on a pony of my own, I also experienced the glow of independence, mingled with that degree of anxiety which the most conceited boy feels when he is first abandoned to his own undirected counsels. I recollect pulling up the reins without meaning to do so, and gazing on the scene before me as if I had been afraid it would shift like those in a theatre before I could distinctly observe its dif-

ferent parts, or convince myself that what I saw was real. Since that hour, and the period is now more than fifty years past, the recollection of that inimitable landscape has possessed the strongest influence over my mind, and retained its place as a memorable thing, when much that was influential on my own fortunes has fled from my recollection. It is therefore natural, that, whilst deliberating on what might be brought forward for the amusement of the public, I should pitch upon some narrative connected with the splendid scenery which made so much impression on my youthful imagination, and which may perhaps have that effect in setting off the imperfections of the composition, which ladies suppose a fine set of china to possess in heightening the flavour of indifferent tea.

The period at which I propose to commence, is, however, considerably earlier than either of the remarkable historical transactions to which I have already alluded, as the events which I am about to recount occurred during the last years of the fourteenth century, when the Scot-

tish sceptre was swayed by the gentle, but feeble hand of John, who reigned under the title of Robert the Third.

CHAPTER II.

Perth, boasting, as we have already mentioned, so large a portion of the beauties of inanimate nature, has at no time been without its own share of those charms which are at once more interesting and more transient. To be called the Fair Maid of Perth, would at any period have been a high distinction, and have inferred no mean superiority in beauty, where there were many to claim that much-envied attribute. But, in the feudal times, to which we now call the reader's attention, female beauty was a quality of much higher importance than it has been since the ideas of chivalry have been in a great measure extinguished. The love of the ancient cavaliers was a licensed species of idolatry, which the love of Heaven alone was theoretically supposed to approach in intensity, and which in practice it seldom equalled. God and the La-

dies were familiarly appealed to in the same breath; and devotion to the fair sex was as peremptorily enjoined upon the aspirant to the honour of chivalry, as that which was due to Heaven. At such a period in society, the power of beauty was almost unlimited. It could level the highest rank with that which was immeasurably inferior.

It was but in the reign preceding that of Robert III., that beauty alone had elevated a person of inferior rank and indifferent morals to share the Scottish throne; and many women, less artful or less fortunate, had risen to greatness from a state of concubinage, for which the manners of the times made allowance and apology. Such views might have dazzled a girl of higher birth than Catharine, or Katie Glover, who was universally acknowledged to be the most beautiful young woman of the city or its vicinity, and whose renown, as the Fair Maid of Perth, had drawn on her much notice from the young gallants of the Royal Court, when it chanced to be residing in or near Perth; insomuch, that more than one nobleman of the highest rank, and most

distinguished for deeds of chivalry, were more attentive to exhibit feats of horsemanship as they passed the door of old Simon Glover, in what was called Couvrefew, or Curfew Street, than to distinguish themselves in the tournaments, where the noblest dames of Scotland were spectators of their address.

But the Glover's daughter—for, as was common with citizens and artizans of that early period, her father, Simon, derived his sirname from the trade which he practised,—showed no inclination to listen to any gallantry which came from those of a station highly exalted above that which she herself occupied; and though probably in no degree insensible to her personal charms, seemed desirous to confine her conquests to those who were within her own sphere of life. Indeed, her beauty being of that kind which we connect more with the mind than with the person, was, notwithstanding her natural kindness and gentleness of disposition, rather allied to reserve than to gaiety, even when in company with her equals;

and the earnestness with which she attended upon the exercises of devotion, induced many to think that Catharine Glover nourished the private wish to retire from the world, and bury herself in the recesses of the cloister. But to such a sacrifice, should it be meditated, it was not to be expected her father, reputed a wealthy man, and having this only child, would yield a willing consent.

In her resolution of avoiding the addresses of the gallant courtiers, the reigning Beauty of Perth was confirmed by the sentiments of her parent. "Let them go," he said; "let them go, Catharine, those gallants, with their capering horses, their jingling spurs, their plumed bonnets, and their trim moustaches; they are not of our class, nor will we aim at pairing with them. To-morrow is Saint Valentine's Day, when every bird chooses her mate; but you will not see the linnet pair with the sparrow-hawk, nor the robin red-breast with the kite. My father was an honest burgher of Perth, and could use his needle as well as I can. Did there come

war to the gates of our fair burgh, down went needles, thread, and shamoy leather, and out came the good head-piece and target from the dark nook, and the long lance from above the chimney. Show me a day that either he or I were absent when the Provost made his musters? Thus we have led our lives, my girl, working to win our bread, and fighting to defend it. I will have no son-in-law that thinks himself better than me; and for these lords and knights, I trust thou wilt always remember thou art too low to be their lawful love, and too high to be their unlawful loon. And now lay by thy work, lass, for it is holytide eve, and it becomes us to go to the evening service, and pray that Heaven may send thee a good Valentine to-morrow."

So the Fair Maid of Perth laid aside the splendid hawking glove which she was embroidering for the Lady Drummond, and putting on her holiday kirtle, prepared to attend her father to the Blackfriars Monastery, which was adjacent to Couvrefew Street in which they lived.

On their passage, Simon Glover, an ancient and esteemed burgess of Perth, somewhat stricken in years and increased in substance, received from young and old the homage due to his velvet jerkin and his gold chain, while the beauty of Catharine, though concealed beneath her screen—which resembled the mantilla still worn in Flanders—called both obeisances and doffings of the bonnet from young and old.

As the pair moved on arm in arm, they were followed by a tall handsome young man, dressed in a yeoman's habit of the plainest kind, but which showed to advantage his fine limbs, as the handsome countenance that looked out from a quantity of curled tresses, surmounted by a small scarlet bonnet, became that species of head-dress. He had no other weapon than a staff in his hand, it not being thought fit that persons of his degree, (for he was an apprentice to the old Glover,) should appear on the street armed with sword or dagger, a privilege which the jack-men, or military retainers of the nobility, esteemed exclusively their own. He attended his master at holytide, partly in the character of a

domestic, or protector, should there be cause for his interference; but it was not difficult to discern, by the earnest attention which he paid to Catharine Glover, that it was to her, rather than to her father, that he desired to dedicate his good offices. Generally speaking, there was no opportunity for his zeal displaying itself; for a common feeling of respect induced passengers to give way to the father and daughter.

But when the steel caps, barrets, and plumes, of squires, archers, and men-at-arms, began to be seen among the throng, the wearers of these warlike distinctions were more rude in their demeanour than the quiet citizens. More than once, when from chance, or perhaps from an assumption of superior importance, such an individual took the wall of Simon in passing, the Glover's youthful attendant bristled up with a look of defiance, and the air of one who sought to distinguish his zeal in his mistress's service by its ardour. As frequently did Conachar, for such was the lad's name, receive a check from his master, who gave him to understand that he did not wish his interference before he required it.

"Foolish boy," he said, "hast thou not lived long enough in my shop to know that a blow will breed a brawl—that a dirk will cut the skin as fast as a needle pierces leather—that I love peace, though I never feared war, and care not which side of the causeway my daughter and I walk upon, so we may keep our road in peace and quietness?"—Conachar excused himself as zealous for his master's honour, yet was scarce able to pacify the old citizen.—"What have we to do with honour?" said Simon Glover. "If thou wouldst remain in my service, thou must think of honesty, and leave honour to the swaggering fools who wear spurs at their heels and iron on their shoulders. If you wish to wear and use such garniture, you are welcome, but it shall not be in my house or in my company."

Conachar seemed rather to kindle at this rebuke than to submit to it. But a sign from Catharine, if that slight raising of her little finger was indeed a sign, had more effect than the angry reproof of his master; and the youth laid aside the military air which seemed natural

to him, and relapsed into the humble follower of a quiet burgher.

Meantime the little party were overtaken by a tall young man wrapped in a cloak, which obscured or muffled a part of his face, a practice often used by the gallants of the time, when they did not wish to be known, or were abroad in quest of adventures. He seemed, in short, one who might say to the world around him, "I desire, for the present, not to be known, or addressed in my own character; but, as I am answerable to myself alone for my actions, I wear my incognito but for form's sake, and care little whether you see through it or not." He came on the right side of Catharine, who had hold of her father's arm, and slackened his pace as if joining their party.

"Good even to you, goodman."

"The same to your worship, and thanks.—May I pray you to pass on?—our pace is too slow for that of your lordship—our company too mean for that of your father's son."

"My father's son can best judge of that, old man. I have business to talk of with you and

with my fair St Catharine here, the loveliest and most obdurate saint in the calendar."

"With deep reverence, my lord," said the old man, "I would remind you that this is good St Valentine's Eve, which is no time for business, and that I can have your worshipful commands by your serving man as early as it pleases you to send them."

"There is no time like the present," said the persevering youth, whose rank seemed to be of a kind which set him above ceremony. "I wish to know whether the buff doublet be finished which I commissioned some time since;—and from you, pretty Catharine, (here he sank his voice to a whisper,) I desire to be informed whether your fair fingers have been employed upon it, agreeably to your promise? But I need not ask you, for my poor heart has felt the pang of each puncture that pierced the garment which was to cover it. Traitress, how wilt thou answer for thus tormenting the heart that loves thee so dearly!"

"Let me entreat you, my lord, to forego this wild talk—it becomes not you to speak thus,

or me to listen. We are of poor rank, but honest manners; and the presence of the father ought to protect the child from such expressions, even from your lordship."

This she spoke so low, that neither her father nor Conachar could understand what she said.

"Well, tyrant," answered the persevering gallant, "I will plague you no longer now, providing you will let me see you from your window to-morrow, when the sun first peeps over the eastern hill, and give me right to be your Valentine for the year."

"Not so, my lord; my father has but now told me that hawks, far less eagles, pair not with the humble linnet. Seek some court lady, to whom your favours will be honour; to me—your highness must permit me to speak the plain truth—they can be nothing but disgrace."

As they spoke thus, the party arrived at the gate of the church. "Your lordship will, I trust, permit us here to take leave of you," said her father. "I am well aware how little you will alter your pleasure for the pain and uneasiness you may give to such as us; but

from the throng of attendants at the gate, your lordship may see that there are others in the church, to whom even your gracious lordship must pay respect."

"Yes—respect; and who pays any respect to me?" said the haughty young lord. "A miserable artizan and his daughter, too much honoured by my slightest notice, have the insolence to tell me that my notice dishonours them. Well, my princess of doe-skin and blue silk, I will teach you to rue this."

As he murmured thus, the Glover and his daughter entered the Dominican Church, and their attendant, Conachar, in attempting to follow them closely, jostled, perhaps not unwillingly, the young nobleman. The gallant, starting from his unpleasing reverie, and perhaps considering this as an intentional insult, seized on the young man by the breast, struck him, and threw him from him. His irritated opponent recovered himself with difficulty, and grasped towards his own side, as if seeking a sword or dagger in the place where it was usually worn; but finding none, he made a

gesture of disappointed rage, and entered the church. During the few seconds he remained, the young nobleman stood with his arms folded on his breast, with a haughty smile, as if defying him to do his worst. When Conachar had entered the church, his opponent, adjusting his cloak yet closer about his face, made a private signal by holding up one of his gloves. He was instantly joined by two men, who, disguised like himself, had waited his motions at a little distance. They spoke together earnestly, after which the young nobleman retired in one direction, his friends or followers going off in another.

Simon Glover, before he entered the church, cast a look towards the group, but had taken his place among the congregation before they separated themselves. He knelt down with the air of a man who has something burthensome on his mind; but when the service was ended, he seemed free from anxiety, as one who had referred himself and his troubles to the disposal of Heaven. The ceremony of High Mass was performed with considerable solemnity, a num-

ber of noblemen and ladies of rank being present. Preparations had indeed been made for the reception of the good old King himself, but some of those infirmities to which he was subject had prevented Robert III. from attending the service, as was his wont. When the congregation were dismissed, the Glover and his beautiful daughter lingered for some time, for the purpose of making their several shrifts in the confessionals, where the priests had taken their places for discharging that part of their duty. Thus it happened that the night had fallen dark, and the way was solitary, when they returned along the now deserted streets to their own dwelling. Most persons had betaken themselves to home and to bed. They who still lingered in the street were night-walkers or revellers, the idle and swaggering retainers of the haughty nobles, who were much wont to insult the peaceful passengers, relying on the impunity which their masters' court favour was too apt to secure them.

It was, perhaps, in apprehension of mischief from some character of this kind, that Conachar,

stepping up to the Glover, said, "Master, walk faster—we are dogg'd."

"Dogg'd, sayest thou? By whom and by how, man?"

"By one man muffled in his cloak, who follows us like our shadow."

"Then will I never mend my pace along the Couvrefew Street, for the best one man that ever trode it."

"But he has arms," said Conachar.

"And so have we, and hands and legs and feet. Why sure, Conachar, you are not afraid of one man?"

"Afraid!" answered Conachar, indignant at the insinuation; "you shall soon know if I am afraid."

"Now you are as far on the other side of the mark, thou foolish boy—thy temper has no middle course; there is no occasion to make a brawl, though we do not run. Walk thou before with Catharine, and I will take thy place. We cannot be exposed to danger so near home as we are."

The Glover fell behind accordingly, and cer-

tainly observed a person keep so close to them, as, the time and place considered, justified some suspicion. When they crossed the street, he also crossed it, and when they advanced or slackened their pace, the stranger's was in proportion accelerated or diminished. The matter would have been of very little consequence had Simon Glover been alone; but the beauty of his daughter might render her the object of some profligate scheme, in a country where the laws afforded such slight protection to those who had not the means to defend themselves. Conachar and his fair charge having arrived on the threshold of their own apartment, which was opened to them by an old female servant, the burgher's uneasiness was ended. Determined, however, to ascertain, if possible, whether there had been any cause for it, he called out to the man whose motions had occasioned the alarm, and who stood still, though he seemed to keep out of reach of the light. "Come, step forward, my friend, and do not play at bo-peep; knowest thou not, that they who walk like phantoms in the dark, are apt to encounter the

conjuration of a quarter-staff? Step forward, I say, and show us thy shapes, man."

"Why, so I can, Master Glover," said one of the deepest voices that ever answered question. "I can show myshapes well enough, only I wish they could bear the light something better."

"Body of me," exclaimed Simon, "I should know that voice!—And is it thou, in thy bodily person, Harry Gow?—nay, beshrew me if thou passest this door with dry lips. What, man, curfew has not rung yet, and if it had, it were no reason why it should part father and son. Come in, man; Dorothy shall get us something to eat, and we will jingle a can ere thou leave us. Come in, I say; my daughter Kate will be right glad to see thee."

By this time he had pulled the person, whom he welcomed so cordially, into a sort of kitchen, which served also upon ordinary occasions the office of parlour. Its ornaments were trenchers of pewter, mixed with a silver cup or two, which, in the highest degree of cleanliness, ornamented a range of shelves like those of a beauffet, popularly called the Bink. A

good fire, with the assistance of a blazing lamp, spread light and cheerfulness through the apartment, and a savoury smell of some victuals which Dorothy was preparing, did not at all offend the unrefined noses of those whose appetite they were destined to satisfy.

Their unknown attendant now stood in full light among them, and though his appearance was neither dignified nor handsome, his face and figure were not only deserving of attention, but seemed in some manner to command it. He was rather below the middle stature, but the breadth of his shoulders, length and brawniness of his arms, and the muscular appearance of the whole man, argued a most unusual share of strength, and a frame kept in vigour by constant exercise. His legs were somewhat bent, but not in a manner which could be said to approach to deformity; on the contrary, which seemed to correspond to the strength of his frame, though it injured in some degree its symmetry. His dress was of buff-hide; and he wore in a belt around his waist a heavy broad-sword, and a dirk or poniard, as if to defend his purse, which (burgher-

fashion) was attached to the same cincture. The head was well proportioned, round, close cropped, and curled thickly with black hair. There was daring and resolution in the dark eye, but the other features seemed to express a bashful timidity, mingled with good humour, and obvious satisfaction at meeting with his old friends. Abstracted from the bashful expression, which was that of the moment, the forehead of Henry Gow, or Smith, (for he was indifferently so called, as both words equally indicated his profession,) was high and noble, but the lower part of the face was less happily formed. The mouth was large, and well-furnished with a set of firm and beautiful teeth, the appearance of which corresponded with the air of personal health and muscular strength, which the whole frame indicated. A short thick beard, and moustaches which had lately been arranged with some care, completed the picture. His age could not exceed eight-and-twenty.

The family appeared all well pleased with the unexpected appearance of an old friend. Simon Glover shook his hand again and again,

Dorothy made her compliments, and Catharine herself offered freely her hand, which Henry held in his massive grasp as if he designed to carry it to his lips, but, after a moment's hesitation, desisted, from fear lest the freedom might be ill taken. Not that there was any resistance on the part of the little hand which lay passive in his grasp; but there was a smile mingled with the blush on her cheek, which seemed to increase the confusion of the gallant. Her father, on his part, called out frankly, as he saw his friend's hesitation,—

"Her lips, man, her lips! and that's a proffer I would not make to every one who crosses my threshold. But, by good St Valentine, (whose holiday will dawn to-morrow,) I am so glad to see thee in the bonny city of Perth again, that it would be hard to tell the thing I could refuse thee."

The Smith,—for, as has been said, such was the craft of this sturdy artizan,—was encouraged modestly to salute the Fair Maid, who yielded the courtesy with a smile of affection that might have become a sister, saying, at the same time,

"Let me hope that I welcome back to Perth a repentant and amended man."

He held her hand as if about to answer, then suddenly, as one who lost courage at the moment, relinquished his grasp; and drawing back as if afraid of what he had done, his dark countenance glowing with bashfulness, mixed with delight, he sate down by the fire on the opposite side from that which Catharine occupied.

"Come, Dorothy, speed thee with the food, old woman;—and Conachar—where is Conachar?"

"He is gone to bed, sir, with a headach," said Catharine, in a hesitating voice.

"Go, call him, Dorothy," said the old Glover; "I will not be used thus by him; his Highland blood, forsooth, is too gentle to lay a trencher or spread a napkin, and he expects to enter our ancient and honourable craft without duly waiting and tending upon his master and teacher in all matters of lawful obedience. Go, call him, I say; I will not be thus neglected."

Dorothy was presently heard screaming up stairs, or more probably up a ladder, to the

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cock-loft, to which the recusant apprentice had made an untimely retreat; a muttered answer was returned, and soon after Conachar appeared in the eating apartment. There was a gloom of deep sullenness on his haughty, though handsome features, and as he proceeded to spread the board, and arrange the trenchers, with salt, spices, and other condiments—to discharge, in short, the duties of a modern domestic, which the custom of the time imposed upon all apprentices—he was obviously disgusted and indignant with the mean office imposed upon him. The Fair Maid of Perth looked with some anxiety at him, as if apprehensive that his evident sullenness might increase her father's displeasure; but it was not till her eyes had sought out his for a second time, that Conachar condescended to veil his dissatisfaction, and throw a greater appearance of willingness and submission into the services which he was performing.

And here we must acquaint our reader, that though the private interchange of looks betwixt Catharine Glover and the young mountaineer indicated some interest on the part of the for-

mer in the conduct of the latter, it would have puzzled the strictest observer to discover whether that feeling exceeded in degree what might have been felt by a young person towards a friend and inmate of the same age, with whom she had lived on habits of intimacy.

"Thou hast had a long journey, son Henry," said Glover, who had always used that affectionate style of speech, though noways akin to the young artizan; "ay, and hast seen many a river besides Tay, and many a fair bigging besides St Johnston."

"But none that I like half so well, and none that are half so much worth my liking," answered the Smith; "I promise you, father, that when I crossed the Wicks of Beglie, and saw the bonny city lie stretched fairly before me like a Fairy Queen in romance, whom the Knight finds asleep among a wilderness of flowers, I felt even as a bird, when it folds its wearied wings to stoop down on its own nest."

"Aha! so thou canst play the Maker* yet?" said the Glover. "What, shall we have our ballets, and our roundels again? our lusty ca-

* Old Scottish for *Poet*.

rols for Christmas, and our mirthful springs to trip it round the May-pole?"

"Such toys there may be forthcoming, father," said Henry Smith, "though the blast of the bellows and the clatter of the anvil make but coarse company to lays of minstrelsy; but I can afford them no better, since I must mend my fortune, though I mar my verses."

"Right again—my own son just," answered the Glover; "and I trust thou has made a saving voyage of it?"

"Nay, I made a thriving one, father—I sold the steel habergeon that you wot of for four hundred marks, to the English Warden of the East Marches, Sir Magnus Redman. He scarce scrupled a penny after I gave him leave to try a sword-dint upon it. The beggarly Highland thief who bespoke it boggled at half the sum, though it had cost me a year's labour."

"What dost thou start at, Conachar?" said Simon, addressing himself, by way of parenthesis, to the mountain disciple; "wilt thou never learn to mind thy own business, without listening to what is passing round thee? What

is it to thee that an Englishman thinks that cheap which a Scottishman may hold dear?"

Conachar turned round to speak, but, after a moment's consideration, looked down, and endeavoured to recover his composure, which had been deranged by the contemptuous manner in which the Smith had spoken of his Highland customers. Henry went on without paying any attention to him.

"I sold at high prices some swords and whingers when I was at Edinburgh. They expect war there; and if it please God to send it, my merchandize will be worth its price. St Dunstan make us thankful, for he was of our craft. In short, this fellow (laying his hand on his purse) who, thou knowest, father, was somewhat lank and low in condition when I set out four months since, is now as round and full as a six-weeks' porker."

"And that other leathern-sheathed iron-hilted fellow who hangs beside him," said the Glover, "has he been idle all this while?—Come, jolly Smith, confess the truth—how many brawls hast thou had since crossing the Tay?"

"Nay, now you do me wrong, father, to

ask me such a question, (glancing a look at Catharine,) in such a presence," answered the armourer; "I make swords, indeed, but I leave it to other people to use them. No, no—seldom have I a naked sword in my fist, save when I am turning them on the anvil or grindstone; and they slandered me to your daughter Catharine, that led her to suspect the quietest burgess in Perth of being a brawler. I wish the best of them would dare say such a word at the Hill of Kinnoul, and never a man on the green but he and I."

"Ay, ay," said the Glover, laughing, "we should then have a fine sample of your patient sufferance—Out upon you, Henry, that you will speak so like a knave to one who knows thee so well! You look at Kate, too, as if she did not know that a man in this country must make his hand keep his head, unless he will sleep in slender security. Come, come; beshrew me if thou hast not spoiled as many suits of armour as thou hast made."

"Why, he would be a bad armourer, father Simon, that could not with his own blow make proof of his own workmanship. If I did not

sometimes cleave a helmet, or strike a sword's point through a harness, I should not know what strength of fabric to give them; and might jingle together such pasteboard work as yonder Edinburgh smiths think not shame to put out of their hands."

"Aha—now would I lay a gold crown thou hast had a quarrel with some Edinburgh Burn-the-wind upon that very ground?"

"A quarrel!—no, father," replied the Perth armourer, "but a measuring of swords with such a one upon St Leonard's Crags, for the honour of my bonny city, I confess. Surely you do not think I would quarrel with a brother craftsman?"

"Ah, to a surety, no. But how did your brother craftsman come off?"

"Why, as one with a sheet of paper on his bosom might come off from the stroke of a lance—or rather, indeed, he came not off at all; for, when I left him, he was lying in the Hermit's Lodge daily expecting death, for which Father Gervis said he was in heavenly preparation."

"Well—any more measuring of weapons?" said the Glover.

"Why, truly, I fought an Englishman at Berwick besides, on the old question of the Supremacy, as they call it—I am sure you would not have me slack at that debate?—and I had the luck to hurt him on the left knee."

"Well done for St Andrew!—to it again.—Whom next had you to deal with?" said Simon, laughing at the exploits of his pacific friend.

"I fought a Scotsman in the Torwood," answered Henry Smith, "upon a doubt which was the better swordsman, which, you are aware, could not be known or decided without a trial. The poor fellow lost two fingers."

"Pretty well for the most peaceful lad in Perth, who never touches a sword but in the way of his profession.—Well, anything more to tell us?"

"Little—for the drubbing of a Highlandman is a thing not worth mentioning."

"For what didst thou drub him, O man of peace?" inquired the Glover.

"For nothing that I can remember," replied the Smith, "except his presenting himself on the south side of Stirling Bridge."

"Well, here is to thee, and thou art welcome to me after all these exploits.—Conachar, bestir thee. Let the cans clink, lad, and thou shalt have a cup of the nut-brown for thyself, my boy."

Conachar poured out the good liquor for his master and for Catharine, with due observance. But that done, he set the flagon on the table, and sate down.

"How now, sirrah!—be these your manners? Fill to my guest, the worshipful Master Henry Smith."

"Master Smith may fill for himself, if he wishes for liquor," answered the youthful Celt. "The son of my father has demeaned himself enough already for one evening."

"That's well crowed for a cockeril," said Henry; "but thou art so far right, my lad, that the man deserves to die of thirst who will not drink without a cup-bearer."

But his entertainer took not the contumacy of the young apprentice with so much patience. —"Now, by my honest word, and by the best glove I ever made," said Simon, "thou shalt

help him with liquor from that cup and flagon, if thee and I are to abide under one roof."

Conachar arose sullenly upon hearing this threat, and, approaching the Smith, who had just taken the tankard in his hand, and was raising it to his head, he contrived to stumble against him and jostle him so awkwardly, that the foaming ale gushed over his face, person, and dress. Good-natured as the Smith, in spite of his warlike propensities, really was in the utmost degree, his patience failed under such a provocation. He seized the young man's throat, being the part which came readiest to his grasp, as Conachar arose from the pretended stumble, and pressing it severely as he cast the lad from him, exclaimed, " Had this been in another place, young gallows-bird, I had stowed the lugs out of thy head, as I have done to some of thy clan before thee."

Conachar recovered his feet with the activity of a tiger, and exclaiming, " Never shall you live to make that boast again !" drew a short sharp knife from his bosom, and springing on Henry Smith, attempted to plunge it into his body over the collar-bone, which must have

been a mortal wound. But the object of this violence was so ready to defend himself by striking up the assailant's hand, that the blow only glanced on the bone, and scarce drew blood. To wrench the dagger from the boy's hand, and to secure him with a grasp like that of his own iron vice, was, for the powerful Smith, the work of a single moment. Conachar felt himself at once in the absolute power of the formidable antagonist whom he had provoked; he became deadly pale, as he had been the moment before glowing red, and stood mute with shame and fear, until, relieving him from his powerful hold, the Smith quietly said, "It is well for thee that thou canst not make me angry—thou art but a boy, and I, a grown man, ought not to have provoked thee. But let this be a warning."

Conachar stood an instant as if about to reply, and then left the room, ere Simon had collected himself enough to speak. Dorothy was running hither and thither for salves and healing herbs. Catharine had swooned at the sight of the trickling blood.

"Let me depart, father Simon," said Henry Smith, mournfully; "I might have guessed I should have my old luck, and spread strife and bloodshed where I would wish most to bring peace and happiness. Care not for me—look to poor Catharine; the fright of such an affray hath killed her, and all through my fault."

"Thy fault, my son!—It was the fault of yon Highland cateran, whom it is my curse to be cumbered with; but he shall go back to his glens to-morrow, or taste the tolbooth of the burgh. An assault upon the life of his master's guest in his master's house!—It breaks all bonds between us. But let me see to thy wound."

"Catharine!" repeated the armourer, "look to Catharine."

"Dorothy will see to her," said Simon; "surprise and fear kill not—skenes and dirks do. And she is not more the daughter of my blood than thou, my dear Henry, art the son of my affections. Let me see the wound. The skene-occle is an ugly weapon in a Highland hand."

"I mind it no more than the scratch of a wild-cat," said the armourer; "and now that

the colour is coming to Catharine's cheek again, you shall see me a sound man in a moment." He turned to a corner in which hung a small mirror, and hastily took from his purse some dry lint, to apply to the slight wound he had received. As he unloosed the leathern jacket from his neck and shoulders, the manly and muscular form which they displayed, was not more remarkable than the fairness of his skin, where it had not, as in hands and face, been exposed to the effects of rough weather, and of his laborious trade. He hastily applied some lint to stop the bleeding, and a little water having removed all other marks of the fray, he buttoned his doublet anew, and turned again to the table where Catharine, still pale and trembling, was, however, recovered from her fainting fit.

"Would you but grant me your forgiveness for having offended you in the very first hour of my return? The lad was foolish to provoke me, and yet I was more foolish to be provoked by such as he. Your father blames me not, Catharine, and cannot you forgive me?"

"I have no power to forgive," answered Ca-

tharine, " what I have no title to resent. If my father chooses to have his house made the scene of night brawls, I must witness them—I cannot help myself. Perhaps it was wrong in me to faint and interrupt, it may be, the farther progress of a fair fray. My apology is, that I cannot bear the sight of blood."

" And is this the manner," said her father, " in which you receive my friend after his long absence? My friend, did I say? nay, my son. He escapes being murdered by a fellow whom I will to-morrow clear this house of, and you treat him as if he had done wrong in dashing from him the snake which was about to sting him!"

" It is not my part, father," returned the Maid of Perth, " to decide who had the right or wrong in the present brawl; nor did I see what happened distinctly enough, to say which was assailant, or which defender. But sure our friend, Master Henry, will not deny that he lives in a perfect atmosphere of strife, blood, and quarrels. He hears of no swordsman but he envies his reputation, and must needs put

his valour to the proof. He sees no brawl but he must strike into the midst of it. Has he friends, he fights with them for love and honour—has he enemies, he fights with them for hatred and revenge. And those men who are neither his friends nor foes, he fights with them because they are on this or that side of a river. His days are days of battle, and doubtless he acts them over again in his dreams."

"Daughter," said Simon, "your tongue wags too freely. Quarrels and fights are men's business, not women's, and it is not maidenly to think or speak of them."

"But if they are so rudely enacted in our presence," said Catharine, "it is a little hard to expect us to think or speak of anything else. I will grant you, my father, that this valiant burgess of Perth is one of the best-hearted men that draws breath within its walls—that he would walk a hundred yards out of the way rather than step upon a worm—that he would be as loath, in wantonness, to kill a spider, as if he were a kinsman to King Robert, of happy memory—that in the last quarrel before his departure he fought with four butchers, to prevent their

killing a poor mastiff that had misbehaved in the bull-ring, and narrowly escaped the fate of the cur that he was protecting. I will grant you also, that the poor never pass the house of the wealthy armourer but they are relieved with food and alms. But what avails all this, when his sword makes as many starving orphans and mourning widows as his purse relieves?"

"Nay, but Catharine, hear me but a word before going on with a string of reproaches against my friend, that sound something like sense, while they are, in truth, inconsistent with all we hear and see around us. What," continued the Glover, "do our King and our court, our knights and ladies, our abbots, monks, and priests themselves, so earnestly crowd to see? Is it not to behold the display of chivalry, to witness the gallant actions of brave knights in the tilt and tourney-ground, to look upon deeds of honour and glory achieved by arms and bloodshed? What is it these proud knights do, that differs from what our good Henry Gow works out in his sphere? Who ever heard of his abusing his skill and strength to do evil or forward oppression, and who knows not how

often it has been employed in the good cause of the burgh? And shouldst not thou, of all women, deem thyself honoured and glorious, that so true a heart and so strong an arm has termed himself thy bachelor? In what do the proudest dames take their loftiest pride, save in the chivalry of their knight; and has the boldest in Scotland done more gallant deeds than my brave son Henry, though but of low degree? Is he not known to Highland and Lowland as the best armourer that ever made sword, and the truest soldier that ever drew one?"

"My dearest father," answered Catharine, "your words contradict themselves, if you will permit your child to say so. Let us thank God and the good saints, that we are in a peaceful rank of life, below the notice of those whose high birth, and yet higher pride, lead them to glory in their bloody works of cruelty, which the proud and lordly term deeds of chivalry. Your wisdom will allow that it would be absurd in us to prank ourselves in their dainty plumes and splendid garments—why, then, should we imitate their full-blown vices? Why should we assume their hard-hearted pride and

relentless cruelty, to which murder is not only a sport, but a subject of vainglorious triumph? Let those whose rank claims as its right such bloody homage, take pride and pleasure in it;—we, who have no share in the sacrifice, may the better pity the sufferings of the victim. Let us thank our lowliness, since it secures us from temptation.—But forgive me, father, if I have stepped over the limits of my duty, in contradicting the views which you entertain, with so many others, on these subjects."

"Nay, thou hast ever too much talk for me, girl," said her father, somewhat angrily. "I am but a poor workman, whose best knowledge is to distinguish the left-hand glove from the right. But if thou wouldst have my forgiveness, say something of comfort to my poor Henry. There he sits, confounded and dismayed with all the preachment thou hast heaped together; and he, to whom a trumpet sound was like the invitation to a feast, is struck down at the sound of a child's whistle."

The armourer, indeed, while he heard the lips that were dearest to him paint his character in such unfavourable colours, had laid his head

down on the table, upon his folded arms, in an attitude of the deepest dejection, or almost despair. "I would to Heaven, my dearest father," answered Catharine, "that it were in my power to speak comfort to Henry, without betraying the sacred cause of the truths I have just told you. And I may,—nay, I must have such a commission," she continued, with something that the earnestness with which she spoke, and the extreme beauty of her features, caused for the moment to resemble inspiration. "The truth of Heaven," she said, in a solemn tone, "was never committed to a tongue, however feeble, but it gave a right to that tongue to announce mercy, while it declared judgment.—Arise, Henry—rise up, noble-minded, good, and generous, though widely mistaken man—Thy faults are those of this cruel and remorseless age—thy virtues all thine own."

While she thus spoke, she laid her hand upon the Smith's arm, and extricating it from under his head by a force which, however gentle, he could not resist, she compelled him to raise towards her his manly face, and the eyes into

which her expostulations, mingled with other feelings, had summoned tears. "Weep not," she said, "or rather weep on—but weep as those who have hope. Abjure the sins of pride and anger, which most easily beset thee—fling from thee the accursed weapons, to the fatal and murderous use of which thou art so easily tempted."

"You speak to me in vain, Catharine," returned the armourer; "I may, indeed, turn monk and retire from the world, but while I live in it I must practise my trade; and while I form armour and weapons for others, I cannot myself withstand the temptation of using them. You would not reproach me as you do, if you knew how inseparably the means by which I gain my bread are connected with that warlike spirit which you impute to me as a fault, though it is the consequence of inevitable necessity. While I strengthen the shield or corslet to withstand wounds, must I not have constantly in remembrance the manner and strength with which they may be dealt; and when I forge the sword, and temper it for war, is it practicable for me to avoid the recollection of its use?"

"Then throw from you, my dear Henry," said the enthusiastic girl, clasping with both her slender hands the nervous strength and weight of one of the muscular armourer's, which they raised with difficulty, permitted by its owner, yet without receiving assistance from his volition—"cast from you, I say, the art which is a snare to you. Abjure the fabrication of weapons which can only be useful to abridge human life, already too short for repentance, or to encourage with a feeling of safety those whom fear might otherwise prevent from risking themselves in peril. The art of forming arms, whether offensive or defensive, is alike sinful in one to whose violent and ever vehement disposition the very working upon them proves a sin and a snare. Resign utterly the manufacture of weapons of every description, and deserve the forgiveness of Heaven, by renouncing all that can lead to the sin which most easily besets you."

"And what," murmured the armourer, "am I to do for my livelihood, when I have given

over the art of forging arms, for which Henry of Perth is known from the Tay to the Thames?"

"Your art itself," said Catharine, "has innocent and laudable resources. If you renounce the forging of swords and bucklers, there remains to you the task of forming the harmless spade, and the honourable as well as useful ploughshare,—of those implements which contribute to the support of life, or to its comforts. Thou canst frame locks and bars to defend the property of the weak against the stouthrief and oppression of the strong. Men will still resort to thee, and repay thy honest industry——"

But here Catharine was interrupted. Her father had heard her declaim against war and tournaments with a feeling, that though her doctrines were new to him, they might not, nevertheless, be entirely erroneous. He felt, indeed, a wish that his proposed son-in-law should not commit himself voluntarily to the hazards which the daring character and great personal strength of Henry the Smith had hi-

therto led him to incur too readily; and so far he would rather have desired that Catharine's arguments should have produced some effect upon the mind of her lover, whom he knew to be as ductile, when influenced by his affections, as he was fierce and intractable when assailed by hostile remonstrances or threats. But her arguments interfered with his views, when he heard her enlarge upon the necessity of his designed son-in-law resigning a trade which brought in more ready income than any at that time practised in Scotland, and more profit to Henry of Perth, in particular, than to any armourer in the nation. He had some indistinct idea, that it would not be amiss to convert, if possible, Henry the Smith from his too frequent use of arms, even though he felt some pride in being connected with one who wielded with such superior excellence those weapons, which in that warlike age it was the boast of all men to manage with spirit. But when he heard his daughter recommend, as the readiest road to this pacific state of mind, that her lover should renounce the gainful trade in which he was held unrival-

led, and which, from the constant private differences and public wars of the time, was sure to afford him a large income, he could withhold his wrath no longer. The daughter had scarce recommended to her lover the fabrication of the implements of husbandry, than, feeling the certainty of being right, of which in the earlier part of their debate he had been somewhat doubtful, the father broke in with—

"Locks and bars, plough-graith and harrow-teeth!—and why not grates and fire-prongs, and Culross girdles, and an ass to carry the merchandize through the country—and thou for another ass to lead it by the halter? Why, Catharine, girl, has sense altogether forsaken thee, or dost thou think that in these hard and iron days, men will give ready silver for anything save that which can defend their own life, or enable them to take that of their enemy? We want swords to protect ourselves every moment now, thou silly wench, and not ploughs to dress the ground for the grain we may never see rise. As for the matter of our daily bread, those who are strong seize it, and

live; those who are weak yield it, and die of hunger. Happy is the man who, like my worthy son, has means of obtaining his living otherwise than by the point of the sword which he makes. Preach peace to him as much as thou wilt—I will never be he will say thee nay; but as for bidding the first armourer in Scotland forego the forging of swords, curtal-axes, and harness, it is enough to drive patience itself mad—Out from my sight!—and next morning I prithee remember, that shouldst thou have the luck to see Henry the Smith, which is more than thy usage of him has deserved, you see a man who has not his match in Scotland at the use of broadsword and battle-axe, and who can work for five hundred merks a-year without breaking a holiday."

The daughter, on hearing her father speak thus peremptorily, made a low obeisance, and, without further good-night, withdrew to the chamber which was her usual sleeping apartment.

CHAPTER III.

The armourer's heart swelled big with various and contending sensations, so that it seemed as if it would burst the leathern doublet under which it was shrouded. He arose—turned away his head, and extended his hand towards the Glover, while he averted his face, as if desirous that his emotion should not be read upon his countenance.

"Nay, hang me if I bid you farewell, man," said Simon, striking the flat of his hand against that which the armourer expanded towards him. "I will shake no hands with you for an hour to come at least. Tarry but a moment, man, and I will explain all this; and surely a few drops of blood from a scratch, and a few silly words from a foolish wench's lips, are not to part father and son, when they have been so

long without meeting? Stay, then, man, if ever you would wish for a father's blessing and St Valentine's, whose blessed eve this chances to be."

The Glover was soon heard loudly summoning Dorothy, and, after some clanking of keys and trampling up and down stairs, Dorothy appeared bearing three large rummer cups of green glass, which were then esteemed a great and precious curiosity, and the Glover followed with a huge bottle, equal at least to three quarts of these degenerate days.—" Here is a cup of wine, Henry, older by half than I am myself; my father had it in a gift from stout old Crabbe the Flemish engineer, who defended Perth so stoutly in the minority of David the Second. We Glovers could always do something in war, though our connexion with it was less than yours who work in steel and iron. And my father had pleased old Crabbe—some other day I will tell you how, and also how long these bottles were concealed under ground, to save them from the reiving Southron. So I will empty a cup to the soul's health of my honoured father—May his

sins be forgiven him! Dorothy, thou shalt drink this pledge, and then be gone to thy cock-loft. I know thine ears are itching, girl, but I have that to say which no one must hear save Henry Smith, the son of mine adoption."

Dorothy did not venture to remonstrate, but taking off her glass, or rather her goblet, with good courage, retired to her sleeping apartment, according to her master's commands. The two friends were left alone.

"It grieves me, friend Henry," said Simon, filling at the same time his own glass and his guest's, "it grieves me, from my soul, that my daughter retains this silly humour; but also, methinks, thou mightst mend it. Why wouldst thou come hither clattering with thy sword and dagger, when the girl is so silly that she cannot bear the sight of these? Dost thou not remember that thou hadst a sort of quarrel with her even before thy last departure from Perth, because thou wouldst not go like other honest quiet burghers, but must be ever armed, like one of the rascally jackmen that wait on the nobility? Sure it is time enough for decent burgesses to

arm, at the tolling of the common bell, which calls us out bodin in effeir of war."*

"Why, my good father, that was not my fault; but I had no sooner quitted my nag than I run hither to tell you of my return, thinking, if it were your will to permit me, that I would get your advice about being Mistress Catharine's Valentine for the year; and then I heard from Mrs Dorothy that you were gone to hear mass at the Black Friars. So, I thought I would follow thither, partly to hear the same mass with you, and partly—Our Lady and St Valentine forgive me—to look upon one who thinks little enough of me—And, as you entered the church, methought I saw two or three dangerous-looking men holding counsel together, and gazing at you and at her, and in especial Sir John Ramorny, whom I knew well enough, for all his disguise, and the velvet patch over his eye, and

* That is, not in dread of war, but in the guise which *effeirs*, or belongs, to war; in arms, namely, offensive and defensive. "Bodin in feir of war," a frequent term in old Scottish history and muniments, means arrayed in warlike guise.

his cloak so like a serving man's;—so methought, father Simon, that as you were old, and yonder slip of a Highlander something too young to do battle, I would even walk quietly after you, not doubting, with the tools I had about me, to bring any one to reason that might disturb you in your way home. You know that yourself discovered me, and drew me into the house, whether I would or no; otherwise, I promise you, I would not have seen your daughter till I had donn'd the new jerkin which was made at Berwick after the latest cut; nor would I have appeared before her with these weapons, which she dislikes so much. Although, to say truth, so many are at deadly feud with me for one unhappy chance or another, that it is as needful for me as for any man in Scotland to go by night with weapons about me."

"The silly wench never thinks of that," said Simon Glover; "she never has sense to consider, that in our dear native land of Scotland every man deems it his privilege and duty to avenge his own wrong. But, Harry, my boy, thou art to blame for taking her talk so much

to heart. I have seen thee bold enough with other wenches—wherefore so still and tongue-tied with her?"

"Because she is something different from other maidens, father Glover—because she is not only more beautiful, but wiser, higher, holier, and seems to me as if she were made of better clay than we that approach her. I can hold my head high enough with the rest of the lasses round the Maypole; but somehow, when I approach Catharine, I feel myself an earthly, coarse, ferocious creature, scarce worthy to look on her, much less to contradict the precepts which she expounds to me."

"You are an imprudent merchant, Harry Smith," replied Simon; "and rate too high the goods you wish to purchase. Catharine is a good girl, and my daughter; but if you make her a conceited ape by your bashfulness and your flattery, neither you nor I will see our wishes accomplished."

"I often fear it, my good father," said the Smith; "for I feel how little I am deserving of Catharine."

"Feel a thread's end!" said the Glover; "feel for me, friend Smith, for Catharine and me. Think how the poor thing is beset from morning to night, and by what sort of persons, even though windows be down and doors shut. We were accosted to-day by one too powerful to be named,—ay, and he showed his displeasure openly, because I would not permit him to gallant my daughter in the church itself, when the priest was saying mass. There are others scarce less reasonable. I sometimes wish that Catharine were some degrees less fair, that she might not catch that dangerous sort of admiration, or somewhat less holy; that she might sit down like an honest woman, contented with stout Henry Smith, who could protect his wife against every sprig of chivalry in the Court of Scotland."

"And if I did not," said Henry, thrusting out a hand and arm which might have belonged to a giant for bone and muscle, "I would I may never bring hammer upon anvil again. Ay, an it were come but that length, my fair Catharine should see that there is no harm in a man

having the trick of defence. But I believe she thinks the whole world is one great Minster-church, and that all who live in it should behave as if they were at an eternal mass."

"Nay, in truth," said the father, "she has strange influence over those who approach her—the Highland lad, Conachar, with whom I have been troubled for these two or three years, although you may see he has the natural spirit of his people, obeys the least sign which Catharine makes him, and, indeed, will hardly be ruled by any one else in the house. She takes much pains with him to bring him from his rude Highland habits."

Here Harry Smith became uneasy in his chair, lifted the flaggon, set it down, and at length exclaimed, "The devil take the young Highland whelp and his whole kindred! What has Catharine to do to instruct such a fellow as he? He will be just like the wolf-cub that I was fool enough to train to the offices of a dog, and every one thought him reclaimed, till, in an ill hour, I went to walk on the hill of Moncrieff, when he broke loose on the Laird's flock, and made

a havock that I might well have rued, had the Laird not wanted harness at the time. And I marvel that you, being a sensible man, father Glover, will keep this Highland young fellow —a likely one, I promise you—so nigh to Catharine, as if there were no other than your daughter to serve him for a schoolmistress."

"Fie, my son, fie,—now, you are jealous," said Simon, "of a poor young fellow, who, to tell you the truth, resides here, because he may not so well live on the other side of the hill."

"Ay, ay, Father Simon," retorted the Smith, who had all the narrow-minded feelings of the burghers of his time, "an it were not for fear of offence, I would say that you have even too much packing and peeling with yonder loons out of burgh."

"I must get my deer-hides, kid-skins, and so forth, somewhere, my good Harry,—and Highlandmen give good bargains."

"They can afford them," replied Henry, drily; "for they sell nothing but stolen gear."

"Well, well,—be that as it may, it is not my business where they get the bestial, so I get

the hides. But as I was saying, there are certain considerations why I am willing to oblige the father of this young man, by keeping him here. And he is but half a Highlander neither, and wants a thought of the dour spirit of a Glune-amie;—after all, I have seldom seen him so fierce as he showed himself but now."

"You could not, unless he had killed his man," replied the Smith, in the same dry tone.

"Nevertheless, if you wish it, Harry, I'll set all other respects aside, and send the landlouper to seek other quarters to-morrow morning."

"Nay, father," said the Smith, "you cannot suppose that Harry Gow cares the value of a smithy-dander * for such a cub as yonder cat-a-mountain? I care little, I promise you, though all his clan were coming down the Shoe-gate with slogan crying, and pipes playing; I would find fifty blades and bucklers would send them back faster than they came. But, to speak truth, though it is a fool's speech too—I care not to see the fellow so much with Catharine. Re-

* Cinder.

member, father Glover, your trade keeps your eyes and hands close employed, and must have your heedful care, even if this lazy lurdane wrought at it, which you know yourself he seldom does."

"And that is true," said Simon; "he cuts all his gloves out for the right hand, and never could finish a pair in his life."

"No doubt, his notions of skin-cutting are rather different," said Henry. "But with your leave, father, I would only say, that work he, or be he idle, he has no bleared eyes,—no hands seared with the hot iron, and welked by the use of the fore-hammer,—no hair rusted in the smoke, and singed in the furnace, like the hide of a badger, rather than what is fit to be covered with a Christian bonnet. Now, let Catharine be as good a wench as ever lived, and I will uphold her to be the best in Perth, yet she must see and know that these things make a difference betwixt man and man, and that the difference is not in my favour."

"Here is to thee, with all my heart, son Harry," said the old man, filling a brimmer to

his companion, and another to himself; "I see, that good smith as thou art, thou ken'st not the mettle that women are made of. Thou must be bold, Henry; and bear thyself not as if thou wert going to the gallow-lee, but like a gay young fellow, who knows his own worth, and will not be slighted by the best grandchild Eve ever had. Catharine is a woman like her mother, and thou thinkest foolishly to suppose they are all set on what pleases the eye. Their ear must be pleased too, man; they must know that he whom they favour is bold and buxom, and might have the love of twenty, though he is sueing for theirs. Believe an old man, women walk more by what others think than by what they think themselves; and when she asks for the boldest man in Perth, whom shall she hear named but Harry Burn-the-wind?—The best armourer that ever fashioned weapon on anvil? why Harry Smith again—The tightest dancer at the May-pole?—why, the lusty smith—The gayest troller of ballads?—why, who but Harry Gow?—The best wrestler, sword-and-buckler player—the king of the weapon-shawing—the

breaker of mad horses—the tamer of wild Highlandmen?—ever more it is thee—thee—no one but thee.—And shall Catharine prefer yonder slip of a Highland boy to thee?—Pshaw! she might as well make a steel gauntlet out of kid's leather. I tell thee, Conachar is nothing to her, but so far as she would fain prevent the devil having his due of him, as of other Highlandmen—God bless her, poor thing, she would bring all mankind to better thoughts if she could."

"In which she will fail to a certainty,"—said the Smith, who, as the reader may have noticed, had no good will to the Highland race. "I will wager on Old Nick, of whom I should know something, he being indeed a worker in the same element with myself, against Catharine on that debate—the devil will have the tartan; that is sure enough."

"Ay, but Catharine," replied the Glover, "hath a second thou knowest little of—Father Clement has taken the young reiver in hand, and he fears a hundred devils as little as I do a flock of geese."

"Father Clement!" said the Smith; "you are always making some new saint in this godly city of Saint Johnstoun. Pray, who, for a devil's drubber, may he be?—one of your hermits that is trained for the work like a wrestler for the ring, and brings himself to trim by fasting and penance—is he not?"

"No, that is the marvel of it," said Simon; "Father Clement eats, drinks, and lives much like other folks—all the rules of the church, nevertheless, strictly observed."

"Oh, I comprehend!—a buxom priest that thinks more of good living than of good life—tipples a can on Fastern's Eve, to enable him to face Lent—has a pleasant *in principio*—and confesses all the prettiest women about town?"

"You are on the bow-hand still, Smith. I tell you, my daughter and I could nose out either a fasting hypocrite or a full one. But Father Clement is neither the one nor the other."

"But what is he then, in Heaven's name?"

"One who is either greatly better than half his brethren of Saint Johnstoun put together, or so much worse than the worst of them, that

it is sin and shame that he is suffered to abide in the country."

"Methinks it were easy to tell whether he be the one or the other," said the Smith.

"Content you, my friend," said Simon, "with knowing, that if you judge Father Clement by what you see him do and hear him say, you will think of him as the best and kindest man in the world, with a comfort for every man's grief, a counsel for every man's difficulty, the rich man's surest guide, and the poor man's best friend. But if you listen to what the Dominicans say of him, he is—Benedicite! (here the Glover crossed himself on brow and bosom)—a foul heretic, who ought by means of earthly flames to be sent to those which burn eternally."

The Smith also crossed himself, and exclaimed—"Saint Mary! father Simon, and do you, who are so good and prudent that you have been called the Wise Glover of Perth, let your daughter attend the ministry of one who—the Saints preserve us!—may be in league with the foul Fiend himself? Why, was it not a priest

who raised the devil in the Meal Vennel, when Hodge Jackson's house was blown down in the great wind?—did not the devil appear in the midst of the Tay, dressed in a priest's scapular, gambolling like a pellach amongst the waves, the morning when our stately bridge was swept away?"

"I cannot tell whether he did or no," said the Glover; "I only know I saw him not. As to Catharine, she cannot be said to use Father Clement's ministry, seeing her confessor is old Father Francis the Dominican, from whom she had her shrift to-day. But women will sometimes be wilful, and sure enough she consults with Father Clement more than I could wish; and yet when I have spoken with him myself, I have thought him so good and holy a man, that I could have trusted my own salvation with him. There are bad reports of him among the Dominicans, that is certain. But what have we laymen to do with such things, my son? Let us pay Mother Church her dues, give our alms, confess and do our penances duly, and the saints will bear us out."

"Ay, truly; and they will have consideration," said the Smith, "for any rash and unhappy blow that a man may deal in a fight, when his party was on defence, and standing up to him; and that's the only creed a man can live upon in Scotland, let your daughter think what she pleases. Marry, a man must know his fence, or have a short lease of his life, in any place where blows are going so rife. Five nobles to our altar have cleared me for the best man I ever had misfortune with."

"Let us finish our flask, then," said the old Glover; "for I reckon the Dominican tower is tolling midnight. And hark thee, son Henry; be at the lattice window on our east gable by the very peep of dawn, and make me aware thou art come by whistling the Smith's call gently. I will contrive that Catharine shall look out at the window, and thus thou wilt have all the privileges of being a gallant Valentine through the rest of the year; which if thou canst not use to thine own advantage, I shall be led to think, that for all thou be'st covered with the lion's hide, Nature has left on thee the long ears of the ass."

"Amen, father," said the armourer; "a hearty good night to you; and God's blessing on your roof-tree, and those whom it covers. You shall hear the Smith's call sound by cock-crowing; I warrant I put Sir Chanticleer to shame."

So saying, he took his leave; and, though completely undaunted, moved through the deserted streets like one upon his guard, to his own dwelling, which was situated in the Mill Wynd, at the western end of Perth.

CHAPTER IV.

The sturdy armourer was not, it may be believed, slack in keeping the appointment assigned by his intended father-in-law. He went through the process of his toilette with more than ordinary care, throwing, as far as he could, those points which had a military air into the shade. He was far too noted a person to venture to go entirely unarmed in a town where he had indeed many friends, but also, from the character of many of his former exploits, several deadly enemies, at whose hands, should they take him at advantage, he knew he had little mercy to expect. He, therefore, wore under his jerkin a *secret*, or coat of chain-mail, made so light and flexible that it interfered as little with his movements as a modern under-waistcoat, yet of such proof as he might safely de-

pend upon, every ring of it having been wrought and joined by his own hands. Above this he wore, like others of his age and degree, the Flemish hose and doublet, which, in honour of the holy tide, were of the best superfine English broad cloth, light blue in colour, slashed out with black satin, and passamented (laced, that is) with embroidery of black silk. His walking boots were of cordovan leather; his cloak of good Scottish grey, which served to conceal a whinger, or *couteau de chasse*, that hung at his belt, and was his only offensive weapon, for he carried in his hand but a rod of holly. His black velvet bonnet was lined with steel, quilted between the metal and his head, and thus constituted a means of defence which might safely be trusted to.

Upon the whole, Henry had the appearance, to which he was well entitled, of a burgher of wealth and consideration, assuming, in his dress, as much consequence as he could display, without stepping beyond his own rank, and encroaching on that of the gentry. Neither did his frank and manly deportment, though

indicating a total indifference to danger, bear the least resemblance to that of the bravoes or swash-bucklers of the day, amongst whom Henry was sometimes unjustly ranked by those who imputed the frays, in which he was so often engaged, to a quarrelsome and violent temper, resting upon a consciousness of his personal strength and knowledge of his weapon. On the contrary, every feature bore the easy and good-humoured expression of one who neither thought of inflicting mischief, nor dreaded it from others.

Having attired himself in his best, the honest armourer next placed nearest to his heart (which throbbed at its touch,) a little gift which he had long provided for Catharine Glover, and which his quality of Valentine would presently give him the title to present, and her to receive, without regard to maidenly scruples. It was a small ruby cut into the form of a heart, transfixed with a golden arrow, and was inclosed in a small purse made of links of the finest work in steel, as if it had been designed for a hauberk to a king. Round the verge of the purse were these words—

Love's darts
Cleave hearts
Through mail-shirts.

This device had cost the armourer some thought, and he was much satisfied with his composition, because it seemed to imply that his skill could defend all hearts saving his own. He wrapped himself in his cloak, and hastened through the still silent streets, determined to appear at the window appointed a little before dawn.

With this purpose he passed up the High Street, and turned down the opening where Saint John's Church now stands, in order to proceed to Curfew Street; when it occurred to him, from the appearance of the sky, that he was at least an hour too early for his purpose, and that it would be better not to appear at the place of rendezvous till near the time assigned. Other gallants were not unlikely to be on the watch as well as himself, about the house of the Fair Maid of Perth; and he knew his own foible so well, as to be sensible of the great chance of

a scuffle arising betwixt them. "I have the advantage," he thought, "by my Father Simon's friendship; and why should I stain my fingers with the blood of the poor creatures that are not worthy my notice, since they are so much less fortunate than myself? No—no—I will be wise for once, and keep at a distance from all temptation to a broil. They shall have no more time to quarrel with me than just what it may require for me to give the signal, and for my father Simon to answer it. I wonder how the old man will contrive to bring her to the window? I fear, if she knew his purpose, he would find it difficult to carry it into execution."

While these lover-like thoughts were passing through his brain, the armourer loitered in his pace, often turning his eyes eastward, and eying the firmament, in which no slight shades of grey were beginning to flicker, to announce the approach of dawn, however distant, which, to the impatience of the stout armourer, seemed on that morning to abstain longer than usual from occupying her eastern barbican. He was now passing slowly under the wall of Saint

Anne's Chapel, (not failing to cross himself and say an *ave*, as he trode the consecrated ground,) when a voice, which seemed to come from behind one of the flying buttresses of the chapel, said, "He lingers that has need to run."

"Who speaks?" said the armourer, looking around him, somewhat startled at an address so unexpected, both in its tone and tenor.

"No matter who speaks," answered the same voice. "Do thou make great speed, or thou wilt scarce make good speed. Bandy not words, but begone."

"Saint or sinner, angel or devil," said Henry, crossing himself, "your advice touches me but too dearly to be neglected. Saint Valentine be my speed!"

So saying, he instantly changed his loitering pace to one with which few people could have kept up, and in an instant was in Couvrefew Street. He had not made three steps towards Simon Glover's, which stood in the midst of the narrow street, when two men started from under the houses on different sides, and advanced, as it were by concert, to intercept his pass-

age. The imperfect light only permitted him to discern that they wore the Highland mantle.

"Clear the way, catheran," said the armourer, in the deep stern voice which corresponded with the breadth of his chest.

They did not answer, at least intelligibly; but he could see that they drew their swords, with the purpose of withstanding him by violence. Conjecturing some evil, but of what kind he could not anticipate, Henry instantly determined to make his way through whatever odds, and defend his mistress, or at least die at her feet. He cast his cloak over his left arm as a buckler, and advanced rapidly and steadily to the two men. The nearest made a thrust at him, but Henry Smith, parrying the blow with his cloak, dashed his arm in the man's face, and tripping him at the same time, gave him a severe fall on the causeway; while almost at the same instant he struck a blow with his whinger at the fellow who was upon his right hand, so severely applied, that he also lay prostrate by his associate. Meanwhile, the armourer pushed forward in alarm, for which the circumstances of

the street being guarded or defended by strangers who conducted themselves with such violence, afforded sufficient reason. He heard a suppressed whisper and a bustle under the Glover's windows—those very windows from which he had expected to be hailed by Catharine as her Valentine. He kept to the opposite side of the street, that he might reconnoitre their number and purpose. But one of the party, who were beneath the window, observing or hearing him, crossed the street also, and taking him doubtless for one of the sentinels, asked, in a whisper, "What noise was yonder, Kenneth? why gave you not the signal?"

"Villain!" said Henry, "you are discovered, and you shall die the death!"

As he spoke thus, he dealt the stranger a blow with his weapon, which would probably have made his words good, had not the man, raising his arm, received on his hand the blow meant for his head. The wound must have been a severe one, for he staggered and fell with a deep groan. Without noticing him farther, Henry Smith sprung forward upon a party of men

who seemed engaged in placing a ladder against the lattice window in the gable. Henry did not stop either to count their numbers or to ascertain their purpose. But crying the alarm-word of the town, and giving the signal at which the burghers were wont to collect, he rushed on the nightwalkers, one of whom was in the act of ascending the ladder. The Smith seized it by the rounds, threw it down on the pavement, and placing his foot on the body of the man who had been mounting, prevented him from regaining his feet. His accomplices struck fiercely at Henry, to extricate their companion. But his mail-coat stood him in good stead, and he repaid their blows with interest, shouting aloud, "Help, help, for bonnie St Johnstoun!—Bows and blades, brave citizens! bows and blades! —they break into our houses under cloud of night."

These words, which resounded far through the streets, were accompanied by as many fierce blows, dealt with good effect among those whom the armourer assailed. In the meantime, the inhabitants of the street began to awaken and

appear on the street in their shirts, with swords and targets, and some of them with torches. The assailants now endeavoured to make their escape, which all of them effected excepting the man who had been thrown down along with the ladder. Him the intrepid armourer had caught by the throat in the scuffle, and held as fast as the greyhound holds the hare. The other wounded men were borne off by their comrades.

"Here are a sort of knaves breaking peace within burgh," said Henry to the neighbours who began to assemble; "make after the rogues. They cannot all get off, for I have maimed some of them; the blood will guide you to them."

"Some Highland catherans—" said the citizens,—"up, and chase, neighbours!"

"Ay, chase—chase,—leave me to manage this fellow," continued the armourer.

The assistants dispersed in different directions, their lights flashing, and their cries resounding through the whole adjacent district.

In the meantime the armourer's captive entreated for freedom, using both promises and

threats to obtain it. "As thou art a gentleman," he said, "let me go, and what is past shall be forgiven."

"I am no gentleman," said Henry—"I am Hal of the Wynd, a burgess of Perth; and I have done nothing to need forgiveness."

"Villain, thou hast done thou knowest not what! But let me go, and I will fill thy bonnet with gold pieces."

"I shall fill thy bonnet with a cloven head presently," said the armourer, "unless thou stand still as a true prisoner."

"What is the matter, my son Harry?" said Simon, who now appeared at the window.—"I hear thy voice in another tone than I expected.—What is all this noise; and why are the neighbours gathering to the affray?"

"There have been a proper set of limmers about to scale your windows, father Simon; but I am like to prove godfather to one of them, whom I hold here, as fast as ever vice held iron."

"Hear me, Simon Glover," said the prisoner; "let me but speak one word with you in

private, and rescue me from the gripe of this iron-fisted and leaden-pated clown, and I will show thee, that no harm was designed to thee or thine; and, moreover, tell thee what will much advantage thee."

"I should know that voice," said Simon Glover, who now came to the door with a dark-lantern in his hand. "Son Smith, let this young man speak with me. There is no danger in him, I promise you. Stay but an instant where you are, and let no one enter the house, either to attack or defend. I will be answerable that this galliard meant but some Saint Valentine's jest."

So saying, the old man pulled in the prisoner and shut the door, leaving Henry a little surprised at the unexpected light in which his father-in-law had viewed the affray. "A jest!" he said; "it might have been a strange jest, if they had got into the maiden's sleeping room!—And they would have done so, had it not been for the honest friendly voice from betwixt the buttresses, which, if it were not that of the blessed Saint, (though what am I that the

holy person should speak to me?) could not sound in that place without her permission and assent, and for which I will promise her a wax candle at her shrine, as long as my whinger,—and I would I had had my two-handed broad-sword in stead, both for the sake of St Johnstoun and of the rogues—for of a certain, those whingers are pretty toys, but more fit for a boy's hand than a man's. Oh, my old two-handed Trojan, hadst thou been in my hands, as thou hang'st presently at the tester of my bed, the legs of those rogues had not carried their bodies so clean off the field.—But there come lighted torches and drawn swords.—So ho—stand!—Are you for St Johnstoun?—If friends to the bonnie burgh, you are well come."

"We have been but bootless hunters," said the townsmen. "We followed by the tracks of the blood into the Dominican burial-ground, and we started two fellows from amongst the tombs, supporting betwixt them a third, who had probably got some of your marks about him, Harry. They got to the postern gate before we could overtake them, and rang the sanctuary

bell,—the gate opened, and in went they. So they are safe in girth and sanctuary, and we may go to our cold beds and warm us."

"Ay," said one of the party, "the good Dominicans have always some devout brother of their convent sitting up to open the gate of the sanctuary to any poor soul that is in trouble, and desires shelter in the church."

"Yes, if the poor hunted soul can pay for it," said another; "but, truly, if he be poor in purse as well as in spirit, he may stand on the outside till the hounds come up with him."

A third, who had been poring for a few minutes upon the ground by advantage of his torch, now looked upwards and spoke. He was a brisk, forward, rather corpulent little man, called Oliver Proudfute, reasonably wealthy, and a leading man in his craft, which was that of bonnet-makers; he, therefore, spoke as one in authority.—"Canst tell us, jolly Smith,"—for they recognised each other by the lights which were brought into the streets,—"what manner of fellows they were who raised up this fray within burgh?"

"The two that I first saw," answered the armourer, "seemed to me, as well as I could observe them, to have Highland plaids about them."

"Like enough—like enough," answered the citizen, shaking his head. "It's a shame the breaches in our walls are not repaired, and that these land-louping Highland scoundrels are left at liberty to take honest men and women out of their beds any night that is dark enough."

"But look here, neighbours," said Oliver Proudfute, showing a bloody hand which he had picked up from the ground; "when did such a hand as this tie a Highlandman's brogues? It is large, indeed, and bony, but as fine as a lady's, with a ring that sparkles like a gleaming candle. Simon Glover has made gloves for this hand before now, if I am not much mistaken, for he works for all the courtiers." The spectators here began to gaze on the bloody token with various comments.

"If that is the case," said one, "Harry Smith had best show a clean pair of heels for it, since the Justiciar will scarce think the pro-

tecting a burgess's house an excuse for cutting off a gentleman's hand. There be hard laws against mutilation."

"Fie upon you, that you will say so, Michael Wabster," answered the bonnet-maker; "are we not representatives and successors of the stout old Romans, who built Perth as like to their own city as they could? And have we not charters from all our noble kings and progenitors, as being their loving liegemen? And would you have us now yield up our rights, privileges, and immunities, our outfang and infang, our handhabend, our back-bearand, and our blood-suits, and amerciaments, escheats, and commodities, and suffer an honest burgess's house to be assaulted without seeking for redress? No—brave citizens, craftsmen, and burgesses, the Tay shall flow back to Dunkeld before we submit to such injustice!"

"And how can we help it?" said a grave old man, who stood leaning on a two-handed sword—"What would you have us do?"

"Marry, Bailie Craigdallie, I wonder that you, of all men ask the question. I would have

you pass like true men from this very place to the King's Grace's presence, raise him from his royal rest, and presenting to him the piteous case of our being called forth from our beds at this season, with little better covering than these shirts, I would show him this bloody token, and know from his Grace's own royal lips, whether it is just and honest that his loving lieges should be thus treated by the knights and nobles of his deboshed court. And this I call pushing our cause warmly."

"Warmly, sayst thou?" replied the old burgess; "why, so warmly that we shall all die of cold, man, before the porter turn a key to let us into the royal presence.—Come, friends, the night is bitter—we have kept our watch and ward like men, and our jolly Smith hath given a warning to those that would wrong us, which shall be worth twenty proclamations of the King. To-morrow is a new day; we will consult on this matter on this self-same spot, and consider what measures should be taken for discovery and pursuit of the villains. And therefore let us dismiss before the heart's-blood freeze in our veins."

"Bravo, bravo, neighbour Craigdallie—St Johnstoun for ever!"

Oliver Proudfute would still have spoken; for he was one of those pitiless orators who think that their eloquence can overcome all inconveniences in time, place, and circumstances. But no one would listen; and the citizens dispersed to their own houses by the light of the dawn, which began now to streak the horizon.

They were scarce gone ere the door of Glover's house opened, and seizing the Smith by the hand, the old man pulled him in.

"Where is the prisoner?" demanded the armourer.

"He is gone—escaped—fled—what do I know of him?" said the Glover. "He got out at the back door, and so through the little garden.—Think not of him, but come and see the Valentine, whose honour and life you have saved this morning."

"Let me but sheathe my weapon," said the Smith—"let me but wash my hands."

"There is not an instant to lose, she is up and almost dressed.—Come on, man. She shall

see thee with thy good weapon in thy hand, and with villain's blood on thy fingers, that she may know what is the value of a true man's service. She has stopped my mouth over long with her pruderies and her scruples. I will have her know what a brave man's love is worth, and a bold burgess's to boot."

CHAPTER IV.

Startled from her repose by the noise of the affray, the Fair Maid of Perth had listened in breathless terror to the sounds of violence and outcry which arose from the street. She had sunk on her knees to pray for assistance, and when she distinguished the voices of neighbours and friends collected for her protection, she remained in the same posture to return thanks. She was still kneeling when her father almost thrust her champion, Henry Smith, into her apartment; the bashful lover hanging back at first, as if afraid to give offence, and, on observing her posture, from respect to her devotion.

"Father," said the armourer, "she prays—

I dare no more speak to her than to a bishop when he says mass."

"Now, go thy ways, for a right valiant and courageous blockhead," said her father; and then speaking to his daughter, he added,—"Heaven is best thanked, my daughter, by gratitude shown to our fellow-creatures. Here comes the instrument by whom God has rescued thee from death, or perhaps from dishonour worse than death. Receive him, Catharine, as thy true Valentine, and him whom I desire to see my affectionate son."

"Not thus—father," replied Catharine. "I can see—can speak to no one now. I am not ungrateful—perhaps I am too thankful to the instrument of our safety; but let me thank the guardian Saint who sent me this timely relief, and give me but a moment to don my kirtle."

"Nay, God-a-mercy, wench, it were hard to deny thee time to busk thy body-clothes, since the request is the only words like a woman that thou hast uttered for these ten days.—Truly, son Harry, I would my daughter would put off being entirely a saint, till the time comes for

her being canonized for St Catharine the Second."

"Nay, jest not, father; for I will swear she has at least one sincere adorer already, who hath devoted himself to her pleasure, so far as sinful man may.—Fare-thee-well then, for the moment, fair maiden," he concluded, raising his voice, "and Heaven send thee dreams as peaceful as thy waking thoughts. I go to watch thy slumbers, and woe with him that shall intrude on them!"

"Nay, good and brave Henry, whose warm heart is at such variance with thy reckless hand, thrust thyself into no farther quarrels to-night; but take the kindest thanks, and with these, try to assume the peaceful thoughts which you assign to me. To-morrow we will meet, that I may assure you of my gratitude—Farewell."

"And farewell, lady and light of my heart!" said the armourer, and, descending the stair which led to Catharine's apartment, was about to sally forth into the street, when the Glover caught him by the arm.

"I shall like the ruffle of to-night," said he,

" better than I ever thought to do the clashing of steel, if it brings my daughter to her senses, Harry, and teaches her what thou art worth. By St Macgrider! I even love these roysterers, and am sorry for that poor lover who will never wear left-handed chevron again. Ay! He has lost that which he will miss all the days of his life, especially when he goes to pull on his gloves,—ay, he will pay but half a fee to my craft in future.—Nay, not a step from this house to-night," he continued. " Thou dost not leave us, I promise thee, my son."

" I do not mean it. But I will, with your permission, watch in the street. The attack may be renewed."

" And if it be," said Simon, " thou wilt have better access to drive them back, having the vantage of the house. It is the way of fighting which suits us burghers best—that of resisting from behind stone walls. Our duty of watch and ward teaches us that trick; besides, enough are awake and astir to ensure us peace and quiet till morning. So come in this way."

So saying, he drew Henry, nothing loath,

into the same apartment where they had supped, and where the old woman, who was on foot, disturbed as others had been by the nocturnal affray, soon roused up the fire.

"And now, my doughty son," said the Glover, "what liquor wilt thou pledge thy father in?"

Henry Smith had suffered himself to sink mechanically upon a seat of old black oak, and now gazed on the fire, that flashed back a ruddy light over his manly features. He muttered to himself half audibly—"*Good* Henry—*brave* Henry—Ah! had she but said, *dear* Henry!"

"What liquors be these?" said the old Glover, laughing. "My cellar holds none such; but if sack, or rhenish, or wine of Gascony can serve, why, say the word and the flagon foams—that is all."

"The *kindest* thanks," said the armourer, still musing; "that's more than she ever said to me before—the *kindest* thanks—what may not that stretch to?"

"It shall stretch like kid's leather, man," said the Glover, "if thou wilt but be ruled,

and say what thou wilt take for thy morning's draught."

"Whatever thou wilt, father," answered the armourer carelessly, and relapsed into the analysis of Catharine's speech to him. "She spoke of my warm heart; but she also spoke of my reckless hand. What earthly thing can I do to get rid of that fighting fancy? Certainly I were best strike my right hand off, and nail it to the door of a church, that it may never do me discredit more."

"You have chopped off hands enough for one night," said his friend, setting a flagon of wine on the table. "Why dost thou vex thyself, man? She would love thee twice as well did she not see how thou doatest upon her. But it becomes serious now. I am not to have the risk of my booth being broken, and my house plundered, by the hell-raking followers of the nobles, because she is called the Fair Maid of Perth, and please ye. No, she shall know I am her father, and will have that obedience to which law and gospel give me right. I will have her thy wife, Henry, my heart of gold—thy wife,

my man of metal, and that before many weeks are over. Come, come, here is to thy merry bridal, jolly Smith."

The father quaffed a large cup, and filled it to his adopted son, who raised it slowly to his head; then, ere it had reached his lips, replaced it suddenly on the table and shook his head.

"Nay, if thou wilt not pledge me to such a health, I know no one who will," said Simon. "What canst thou mean, thou foolish lad? Here has a chance happened, which in a manner places her in thy power, since from one end of the city to the other, all would cry fie on her if she should say thee nay. Here am I her father, not only consenting to the cutting out of the match, but willing to see you two as closely united together, as ever needle stitched buckskin. And with all this on thy side, fortune, father, and all, thou lookest like a distracted lover in a ballad, more like to pitch thyself into the Tay, than to woo a lass that may be had for the asking, if you can but choose the lucky minute."

"Ay, but that lucky minute, father! I question much if Catharine ever has such a moment

to glance on earth and its inhabitants, as might lead her to listen to a coarse ignorant borrel man like me. I cannot tell how it is, father; elsewhere I can hold up my head like another man, but with your saintly daughter I lose heart and courage, and I cannot help thinking that it would be well nigh robbing a holy shrine, if I could succeed in surprising her affections. Her thoughts are too much fitted for heaven to be wasted on such a one as I am."

"E'en as you like, Henry," answered the Glover. "My daughter is not courting you any more than I am—a fair offer is no cause of feud; —only if you think that I will give into her foolish notions of a convent, take it with you that I will never listen to them. I love and honour the church," he said, crossing himself. "I pay her rights duly and cheerfully; tithes and alms, wine and wax, I pay them as justly, I say, as any man in Perth of my means doth; but I cannot afford the church my only and single ewe-lamb that I have in the world. Her mother was dear to me on earth, and is now an angel in heaven. Catharine is all I have to remind

me of her I have lost; and if she goes to the cloister, it shall be when these old eyes are closed for ever, and not sooner.—But as for you, friend Gow, I pray you will act according to your own best liking. I want to force no wife on you, I promise you."

"Nay, now, you beat the iron twice over," said Henry. "It is thus we always end, father, by your being testy with me for not doing that thing in the world which would make me happiest, were I to have it in my power. Why, father, I would the keenest dirk I ever forged were sticking in my heart at this moment, if there is one single particle in it that is not more your daughter's property than my own. But what can I do? I cannot think less of her, or more of myself, than we both deserve; and what seems to you so easy and certain, is to me as difficult as it would be to work a steel hauberk out of hards of flax.—But here is to you, father," he added, in a more cheerful tone; "and here is to my fair Saint and Valentine, as I hope your Catharine will be mine for the season. And let me not keep your old head

longer from the pillow, but make interest with your feather-bed till day-break; and then you must be my guide to your daughter's chamber-door, and my apology for entering it, to bid her good morrow, for the brightest that the sun will awaken in the city or for miles round it!"

"No bad advice, my son," said the honest Glover. "But you, what will you do? will you lie down beside me, or take a part of Conachar's bed?"

"Neither," answered Harry Gow; "I should but prevent your rest; and for me this easy-chair is worth a down bed, and I will sleep like a sentinel, with my graith about me."

As he spoke, he laid his hand on his sword.

"Nay, Heaven send us no more need of weapons.—Good night, or rather, good morrow, till day-peep—and the first who wakes calls up the other."

Thus parted the two burghers. The Glover retired to his bed, and, it is to be supposed, to rest. The lover was not so fortunate. His bodily frame easily bore the fatigue which he had encountered in the course of the night, but his

mind was of a different and more delicate mould. In one point of view, he was but the stout burgher of his period, proud alike of his art in making weapons, and wielding them when made; his professional jealousy, personal strength, and skill in the use of arms, brought him into many quarrels, which had made him generally feared, and in some instances disliked. But with these qualities were united the simple good-nature of a child, and at the same time an imaginative and enthusiastic temper, which seemed little to correspond with his labours at the forge, or his combats in the field. Perhaps a little of the hair-brained and ardent feeling which he had picked out of old ballads, or from the metrical romances which were his sole source of information or knowledge, may have been the means of pricking him on to some of his achievements, which had often a rude strain of chivalry in them; at least, it was certain that his love to the fair Catharine had in it a delicacy such as might have become the squire of low degree, who was honoured, if song speaks truth, with the smiles of the King of Hungary's

daughter. His sentiments towards her were certainly as exalted as if they had been fixed upon an actual angel, which made old Simon, and others who watched his conduct, think that his passion was too high and devotional to be successful with maiden of mortal mould. They were mistaken, however. Catharine, coy and reserved as she was, had a heart which could feel and understand the nature and depth of the armourer's passion; and whether she was able to repay it or not, she had as much secret pride in the attachment of the redoubted Henry Gow, as a lady of romance may be supposed to have in the company of a tame lion, who follows to provide for and defend her. It was with sentiments of the most sincere gratitude that she recollected, as she awoke at dawn, the services of Henry during the course of the eventful night, and the first thought which she dwelt upon, was the means of making him understand her feelings.

Arising hastily from bed, and half blushing at her own purpose—" I have been cold to him, and perhaps unjust; I will not be ungrateful,"

she said to herself, "though I cannot yield to his suit; I will not wait till my father compels me to receive him as my Valentine for the year; I will seek him out, and choose him myself. I have thought other girls bold, when they did something like this; but I shall thus best please my father, and but discharge the rites due to good Saint Valentine by showing my gratitude to this brave man."

Hastily slipping on her dress, which, nevertheless, was left a good deal more disordered than usual, she tripped down stairs and opened the door of the chamber, in which, as she had guessed, her lover had passed the hours after the fray. Catharine paused at the door, and became half afraid of executing her purpose, which not only permitted but enjoined the Valentines of the year to begin their connexion with a kiss of affection. It was looked upon as a peculiarly propitious omen, if the one party could find the other asleep, and awaken him or her by performance of this interesting ceremony.

Never was a fairer opportunity offered for

commencing this mystic tie, than that which now presented itself to Catharine. After many and various thoughts, sleep had at length overcome the stout armourer in the chair in which he had deposited himself. His features, in repose, had a more firm and manly cast than Catharine had thought, who, having generally seen them fluctuating between shamefacedness and apprehension of her displeasure, had been used to connect with them some idea of imbecility.

"He looks very stern," she said; "if he should be angry—and then when he awakes—we are alone—if I should call Dorothy—if I should wake my father—but no! it is a thing of custom, and done in all maidenly and sisterly love and honour. I will not suppose that Henry can misconstrue it, and I will not let a childish fear put my gratitude to sleep."

So saying, she tripped along the floor of the apartment with a light, though hesitating step, and a cheek crimsoned at her own purpose; and gliding to the chair of the sleeper, dropped a kiss upon his lips as light as if a rose-leaf had fallen on them. The slumbers must have been

slight which such a touch could dispel, and the dreams of the sleeper must needs have been connected with the cause of the interruption, since Henry, instantly starting up, caught the maiden in his arms, and attempted to return in ecstasy the salute which had broken his repose. But Catharine struggled in his embrace; and as her efforts implied alarmed modesty, rather than maidenly coyness, her bashful lover suffered her to escape a grasp, from which twenty times her strength could not have extricated her.

"Nay, be not angry, good Henry," said Catharine, in the kindest tone, to her surprised lover. "I have paid my vows to Saint Valentine, to show how I value the mate which he has sent me for the year. Let but my father be present, and I will not dare to refuse thee the revenge you may claim for a broken sleep."

"Let not that be a hinderance," said the old Glover, rushing in ecstasy into the room—"to her, Smith—to her—strike while the iron is hot, and teach her what it is not to let sleeping dogs lie still."

Thus encouraged, Henry, though perhaps with less alarming vivacity, again seized the blushing maiden in his arms, who submitted with a tolerable grace to receive repayment of her salute, a dozen times repeated, and with an energy very different from that which had provoked such severe retaliation. At length, she again extricated herself from her lover's arms, and, as if frightened and repenting what she had done, threw herself into a seat, and covered her face with her hands.

"Cheer up, thou silly girl," said her father, "and be not ashamed that thou hast made the two happiest men in Perth, since thy old father is one of them. Never was kiss so well bestowed, and meet it is that it should be suitably returned. Look up, my darling! look up, and let me see thee but give one smile. By my honest word, the sun that now rises over our fair city shows no sight that can give me greater pleasure.—What," he continued, in a jocose tone, "thou thoughtst thou hadst Jamie Keddie's ring, and couldst walk invisible? but not so, my fairy of the dawning. Just as I was about to

rise, I heard thy chamber door open, and watched thee down stairs—not to protect thee against this sleepy-headed Henry, but to see with my own delighted eyes, my beloved girl do that which her father most wished.—Come, put down these foolish hands, and though thou blushest a little, it will only the better grace St Valentine's morn, when blushes best become a maiden's cheek."

As Simon Glover spoke, he pulled away, with gentle violence, the hands which hid his daughter's face. She blushed deeply, indeed, but there was more than maiden's shame in her face, and her eyes were fast filling with tears.

"What! weeping, love?" continued her father,—"nay, nay, this is more than need—Henry, help me to comfort this little fool."

Catharine made an effort to collect herself and to smile, but the smile was of a melancholy and serious cast.

"I only meant to say, father," said the Fair Maid of Perth, with continued exertion, "that in choosing Henry Gow for my Valentine, and rendering to him the rights and greeting of the

morning, according to wonted custom, I meant but to show my gratitude to him for his manly and faithful service, and my obedience to you.—But do not lead him to think—and, oh, dearest father, do not yourself entertain an idea, that I meant more than what the promise to be his faithful and affectionate Valentine through the year requires of me."

"Ay—ay—ay—ay—we understand it all," said Simon, in the soothing tone which nurses apply to children—"We understand what the meaning is; enough for once; enough for once. Thou shalt not be frightened or hurried.—Loving, true, and faithful Valentines are ye, and the rest as Heaven and opportunity shall permit. Come, prithee, have done—wring not thy tiny hands, nor fear farther persecution now. Thou hast done bravely, excellently—And now, away to Dorothy, and call up the old sluggard; we must have a substantial breakfast, after a night of confusion and a morning of joy; and thy hand will be needed to prepare for us some of these delicate cakes, which no one can make but thyself; and well hast thou

a right to the secret, seeing who taught it thee. —Ah! health to the soul of thy dearest mother," he added, with a sigh; "how blithe would she have been to see this happy St Valentine's morning!"

Catharine took the opportunity of escape which was thus given her, and glided from the room. To Henry it seemed as if the sun had disappeared from the heaven at mid-day, and left the world in sudden obscurity. Even the high-swelled hopes with which the late incident had filled him, began to quail, as he reflected upon her altered demeanour; the tears in her eyes; the obvious fear which occupied her features; and the pains she had taken to show, as plainly as delicacy would permit, that the advances which she had made to him were limited to the character with which the rites of the day had invested him. Her father looked on his fallen countenance with something like surprise and displeasure.

"In the name of good St John, what has befallen you, that makes you look as grave as an owl, when a lad of your spirit, having really

such a fancy for this poor girl as you pretend, ought to be as lively as a lark?"

"Alas, father!" replied the crest-fallen lover, "there is that written on her brow, which says she loves me well enough to be my Valentine, especially since you wish it—but not well enough to be my wife."

"Now, a plague on thee for a cold, down-hearted goose-cap," answered the father. "I can read a woman's brow as well, and better than thou; and I can see no such matter on hers. What, the foul fiend, man! there thou wast lying like a lord in thy elbow-chair, as sound asleep as a judge, when, hadst thou been a lover of any spirit, thou wouldst have been watching the east for the first ray of the sun. But there thou layest, snoring, I warrant, thinking nought about her, or anything else; and the poor girl rises at peep of day, lest any one else should pick up her most precious and vigilant Valentine, and wakes thee with a grace, which—so help me St Macgrider!—would have put life in an anvil; and thou awakest to hone, and pine, and moan, as if she had

drawn a hot iron across thy lips! I would to St John she had sent old Dorothy on the errand, and bound thee for thy Valentine service to that bundle of dry bones, with never a tooth in her head. She were fittest Valentine in Perth for so craven a wooer."

"As to craven, father," answered the Smith, "there are twenty good cocks, whose combs I have plucked, can tell thee if I am craven or no. And Heaven knows, that I would give my good land, held by burgess' tenure, with smithy, bellows, tongs, anvil, and all, providing it would make your view of the matter the true one. But it is not of her coyness, or her blushes, that I speak; it is of the paleness which so soon followed the red, and chased it from her cheeks; and it is of the tears which succeeded. It was like the April shower stealing upon, and obscuring the fairest dawning that ever beamed over the Tay."

"Tutti taitti," replied the Glover; "neither Rome nor Perth were built in a day. Thou hast fished salmon a thousand times, and mightst have taken a lesson. When the fish has taken

the fly, to pull a hard strain on the line would snap the tackle to pieces, were it made of wire. Ease your hand, man, and let him rise; take leisure, and in half-an-hour thou layest him on the bank.—There is a beginning, as fair as you could wish, unless you expect the poor wench to come to thy bed-side, as she did to thy chair; and that is not the fashion of modest maidens. But observe me; after we have had our breakfast, I will take care thou hast an opportunity to speak thy mind; only beware thou be neither too backward, nor press her too hard. Give her line enough; but do not slack too fast, and my life for yours upon the issue."

"Do what I can, father," answered Henry, "you will always lay the blame on me; either that I give too much head, or that I strain the tackle. I would give the best habergeon I ever wrought, that the difficulty in truth rested with me; for there were then the better chance of its being removed. I own, however, I am but an ass in the trick of bringing about such discourse as is to the purpose for the occasion."

"Come into the booth with me, my son, and

I will furnish thee with a fitting theme. Thou knowest the maiden who ventures to kiss a sleeping man, wins of him a pair of gloves. Come to my booth; thou shalt have a pair of delicate kid-skin, that will exactly suit her hand and arm.—I was thinking of her poor mother when I shaped them," added honest Simon, with a sigh; " and except Catharine, I know not the woman in Scotland whom they would fit, though I have measured most of the high beauties of the court. Come with me, I say, and thou shalt be provided with a theme to wag thy tongue upon, providing thou have courage and caution to stand by thee in thy wooing."

CHAPTER V.

Never to man shall Catharine give her hand.
Taming of a Shrew.

THE breakfast was served, and the thin soft cakes, made of flour and honey according to the family receipt, were not only commended with all the partiality of a father and a lover, but done liberal justice to in the mode which is best proof of cake as well as pudding. They talked, jested, and laughed. Catharine, too, had recovered her equanimity where the dames and damsels of the period were apt to lose theirs —in the kitchen, namely, and in the superintendence of household affairs, in which she was an adept. I question much, if the perusal of Seneca for as long a period, would have had equal effect in composing her mind.

Old Dorothy sate down at the board-end, as was the homespun fashion of the period; and so much were the two men amused with their own conversation,—and Catharine occupied either in attending to them, or with her own reflections,—that the old woman was the first who observed the absence of the boy Conachar.

"It is true," said the Master Glover; "go call him, the idle Highland loon. He was not seen last night during the fray neither, at least I saw him not. Did any of you observe him?"

The reply was negative; and Henry's observation followed,—

"There are times when Highlanders can couch like their own deer,—ay, and run from danger too as fast. I have seen them do so myself, for the matter of that."

"— And there are times," replied Simon, "when King Arthur and his Round Table could not make stand against them. I wish, Henry, you would speak more reverently of the Highlanders. They are often in Perth, both alone and in numbers; and you ought to keep peace with them, so long as they will keep peace with you."

An answer of defiance rose to Henry's lips, but he prudently suppressed it.

"Why, thou knowest, father," he said, smiling, "that we handicrafts best love the folks we live by; now, my craft provides for valiant and noble knights, gentle squires and pages, stout men-at-arms, and others that wear the arms which we make. It is natural I should like the Ruthvens, the Lindsays, the Ogilvys, the Oliphants, and so many others of our brave and noble neighbours, who are sheathed in steel of my making, like so many Paladins, better than those naked, snatching mountaineers, who are ever doing us wrong, especially since no five of each clan have a rusty shirt of mail as old as their *brattach*;* and that is but the work of the clumsy clan-smith after all, who is no member of our honourable mystery, but simply works at the anvil, where his father wrought before him. I say, such people can have no favour in the eyes of an honest craftsman."

"Well, well," answered Simon; "I prithee

* Standard.

let the matter rest even now, for here comes the loitering boy; and though it is a holiday morn, I want no more bloody puddings."

The youth entered accordingly. His face was pale, his eyes red; and there was an air of discomposure about his whole person. He sate down at the lower end of the table, opposite to Dorothy, and crossed himself, as if preparing for his morning's meal. As he did not help himself to any food, Catharine offered him a platter containing some of the cakes which had met with such general approbation. At first he rejected her offered kindness rather sullenly; but on her repeating the offer with a smile of good-will, he took a cake in his hand, broke it, and was about to eat a morsel, when the effort to swallow seemed almost too much for him; and though he succeeded, he did not repeat it.

"You have a bad appetite for Saint Valentine's morning, Conachar," said his good-humoured master; "and yet I think you must have slept soundly the night before, since I conclude you were not disturbed by the noise of the scuffle. Why, I thought a lively Glunami would have been at his master's side, dirk in

hand, at the first sound of danger which arose within a mile of us."

"I heard but an indistinct noise," said the youth, his face glowing suddenly like a heated coal, "which I took for the shout of some merry revellers; and you are wont to bid me never open door or window, or alarm the house, on the score of such folly."

"Well, well," said Simon; "I thought a Highlander would have known better the difference betwixt the clash of swords and the twanging on harps, the wild war-cry and the merry hunts up. But let it pass, boy; I am glad thou art losing thy quarrelsome fashions. Eat thy breakfast, any way, as I have that to employ thee, which requires haste."

"I have breakfasted already, and am in haste myself. I am for the hills.—Have you any message to my father?"

"None," replied the Glover, in some surprise; "but art thou beside thyself, boy? or what a vengeance takes thee from the city, like the wing of the whirlwind?"

"My warning has been sudden," said Conachar, speaking with difficulty; but whether ari-

sing from the hesitation incidental to the use of a foreign language, or whether from some other cause, could not easily be distinguished. "There is to be a meeting—a great hunting——" Here he stopped.

"And when are you to return from this blessed hunting?" said his master; "that is, if I may make so bold as to ask."

"I cannot exactly answer," replied the apprentice. "Perhaps never—if such be my father's pleasure," continued Conachar, with assumed indifference.

"I thought," said Simon Glover, rather seriously, "that all this was to be laid aside, when at earnest intercession I took you under my roof. I thought that when I undertook, being very loath to do so, to teach you an honest trade, we were to hear no more of hunting, or hosting, or clan-gatherings, or any matters of the kind?"

"I was not consulted when I was sent hither," said the lad, haughtily. "I cannot tell what the terms were."

"But I can tell you, Sir Conachar," said the Glover, angrily, "that there is no fashion

of honesty in binding yourself to an honest craftsman, and spoiling more hides than your own is worth; and now, when you are of age to be of some service, in taking up the disposal of your time at your pleasure, as if it were your own property, not your master's."

"Reckon with my father about that," answered Conachar; "he will pay you gallantly—a French mutton* for every hide I have spoiled, and a fat cow or bullock for each day I have been absent."

"Close with him, friend Glover—close with him," said the armourer, drily. "Thou wilt be paid gallantly at least, if not honestly. Methinks I would like to know how many purses have been emptied to fill the goatskin sporran,† that is to be so free to you of its gold, and whose pastures

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* *Mouton*, a French gold coin, so called from its being impressed with the image of a lamb.

† The Highland pouch, generally formed of goatskin, and worn in front of the garb, is called in Gaelic a *Sporran*. A *sporran-moullach* is a shaggy pouch, formed, as they usually are, of goatskin, or some such material, with the rough side outermost.

the bullocks have been calved in, that are to be sent down to you from the Grampian passes."

"You remind me, friend," said the Highland youth, turning haughtily towards the Smith, "that I have also a reckoning to hold with you."

"Keep at arm's-length, then," said Henry, extending his brawny arm,—"I will have no more close hugs—no more bodkin work, like last night. I care little for a wasp's sting, yet I will not allow the insect to come near me if I have warning."

Conachar smiled contemptuously. "I meant thee no harm," he said. "My father's son did thee but too much honour to spill such churl's blood. I will pay you for it by the drop, that it may be dried up, and no longer soil my fingers."

"Peace, thou bragging ape!" said the Smith; "the blood of a true man cannot be valued in gold. The only expiation would be that thou shouldst come a mile into the Low Country with two of the strongest gallo-glasses of thy clan; and while I dealt with them, I would leave thee to the correction of my apprentice, little Jankin."

Here Catharine interposed. "Peace," she said, "my trusty Valentine, whom I have a right to command; and peace you, Conachar, who ought to obey me as your master's daughter. It is ill done to awaken again on the morrow the evil which has been laid to sleep at night."

"Farewell, then, master," said Conachar, after another look of scorn at the Smith, which he only answered with a laugh, "Farewell! and I thank you for your kindness, which has been more than I deserved. If I have at times seemed less than thankful, it was the fault of circumstances, and not of my will. Catharine——" He cast upon the maiden a look of strong emotion, in which various feelings were blended. He hesitated, as if to say something, and at length turned away with the single word *farewell.* Five minutes afterwards, with Highland buskins on his feet, and a small bundle in his hand, he passed through the north gate of Perth, and directed his course to the Highlands.

"There goes enough of beggary and of pride for a whole Highland clan," said Henry. "He talks as familiarly of gold pieces as I would of

silver pennies; and yet I will be sworn that the thumb of his mother's worsted glove might hold the treasure of the whole clan."

"Like enough," said the Glover, laughing at the idea; "his mother was a large-boned woman, especially in the fingers and wrist."

"And as for cattle," continued Henry, "I reckon his father and brothers steal sheep by one at a time."

"The less we say of them the better," said the Glover, becoming again grave. "Brothers he hath none; his father is a powerful man—hath long hands—reaches as far as he can, and hears farther than it is necessary to talk of him."

"And yet he hath bound his only son apprentice to a glover in Perth?" said Henry. "Why, I should have thought the Gentle Craft, as it is called, of St Crispin, would have suited him best; and that if the son of some great Mac or O was to become an artizan, it could only be in the craft where princes set him the example."

This remark, though ironical, seemed to awa-

ken our friend Simon's sense of professional dignity, which was a prevailing feeling that marked the manners of the artizans of the time.

"You err, son Henry," he replied, with much gravity; "the glovers are the more honourable craft of the two, in regard they provide for the accommodation of the hands, whereas the shoemakers and cordwainers do but work for the feet."

"Both equally necessary members of the body corporate," said Henry, whose father had been a cordwainer.

"It may be so, my son," said the Glover; "but not both alike honourable. Bethink you, that we employ the hands as pledges of friendship and good faith, and the feet have no such privilege. Brave men fight with their hands—cowards employ their feet in flight. A glove is borne aloft, a shoe is trampled in the mire;—a man greets a friend with his open hand; he spurns a dog, or one whom he holds as mean as a dog, with his advanced foot. A glove on the point of a spear is a sign and pledge of faith all the wide world over, as a gauntlet

flung down is a gage of knightly battle; while I know no other emblem belonging to an old shoe, except that some crones will fling them after a man by way of good luck, in which practice I avow myself to entertain no confidence."

"Nay," said the Smith, amused with his friend's eloquent pleading for the dignity of the art he practised, "I am not the man, I promise you, to disparage the glover's mystery. Bethink you, I am myself a maker of gauntlets. But the dignity of your ancient craft removes not my wonder, that the father of this Conachar suffered his son to learn a trade of any kind from a Lowland craftsman, holding us, as they do, altogether beneath their magnificent degree, and a race of contemptible drudges, unworthy of any other fate than to be ill used and plundered, as often as these bare-breeched Dunniewassals see safety and convenience for doing so."

"Ay," answered the Glover, "but there were powerful reasons for — for——" He withheld something which seemed upon his

lips, and went on, "for Conachar's father acting as he did.—Well, I have played fair with him, and I do not doubt but he will act honourably by me.—But Conachar's sudden leave-taking has put me to some inconvenience. He had things under his charge. I must look through the booth."

"Can I help you, father?" said Henry Gow, deceived by the earnestness of his manner.

"You?—no,"—said Simon, with a dryness which made Henry so sensible of the simplicity of his proposal, that he blushed to the eyes at his own dulness of comprehension, in a matter where love ought to have induced him to take his cue easily up. "You, Catharine," said the Glover, as he left the room, "entertain your Valentine for five minutes, and see he departs not till my return.—Come hither with me, old Dorothy, and bestir thy limbs in my behalf."

He left the room, followed by the old woman; and Henry Smith remained with Catharine, almost for the first time in his life, entirely alone. There was embarrassment on the maiden's part, and awkwardness on that of the lover, for about

a minute; when Henry, calling up his courage, pulled the gloves out of his pocket with which Simon had supplied him, and asked her to permit one who had been so highly graced that morning, to pay the usual penalty for being asleep at the moment when he would have given the slumbers of a whole twelvemonth to be awake for a single minute.

"Nay, but," said Catharine, "the fulfilment of my homage to St Valentine infers no such penalty as you desire to pay, and I cannot therefore think of accepting them."

"These gloves," said Henry, advancing his seat insidiously towards Catharine as he spoke, "were wrought by the hands that are dearest to you; and see—they are shaped for your own." He extended them as he spoke, and taking her arm in his robust hand, spread the gloves beside it to show how well they fitted. "Look at that taper arm," he said, "look at these small fingers; think who sewed these seams of silk and gold, and think whether the glove, and the arm which alone the glove can fit, ought to remain separate, because the poor glove has

had the misfortune to be for a passing minute in the keeping of a hand so swart and rough as mine."

"They are welcome as coming from my father," said Catharine; "and surely not less so as coming from my *friend*, (and there was an emphasis on the word,) as well as my Valentine and preserver."

"Let me aid to do them on," said the Smith, bringing himself yet closer to her side; "they may seem a little over tight at first, and you may require some assistance."

"You are skilful in such service, good Henry Gow," said the maiden, smiling, but at the same time drawing farther from her lover.

"In good faith no," said Henry, shaking his head; "my experience has been in donning steel gauntlets on mailed knights, more than in fitting embroidered gloves upon maidens."

"I will trouble you then no further, and Dorothy shall aid me—though there needs no assistance—my father's eye and fingers are faithful to his craft; what work he puts through his hands is always true to the measure."

"Let me be convinced of it," said the Smith; "let me see that these slender gloves actually match the hands they were made for."

"Some other time, good Henry," answered the maiden; "I will wear the gloves in honour of St Valentine, and the mate he has sent me for the season. I would to heaven I could pleasure my father as well in weightier matters—at present the perfume of the leather harms the head-ach I have had since morning."

"Head-ach! dearest maiden?" echoed her lover.

"If you call it heart-ach, you will not misname it," said Catharine, with a sigh, and proceeded to speak in a very serious tone. "Henry," she said, "I am going perhaps to be as bold as I gave you reason to think me this morning; for I am about to speak the first upon a subject, on which, it may well be, I ought to wait till I had to answer you. But I cannot, after what has happened this morning, suffer my feelings towards you to remain unexplained, without the possibility of my being greatly misconceived.—Nay, do not answer till you have

heard me out.—You are brave, Henry, beyond most men, honest and true as the steel you work upon——"

"Stop—stop, Catharine, for mercy's sake! You never said so much that was good concerning me, save to introduce some bitter censure, of which your praises were the harbingers. I am honest, and so forth, you would say, but a hot-brained brawler, and common sworder or stabber."

"I should injure both myself and you in calling you such. No, Henry, to no common stabber, had he worn a plume in his bonnet, and gold spurs on his heels, would Catharine Glover have offered the little grace she has this day voluntarily done to you. If I have at times dwelt severely upon the proneness of your spirit to anger, and of your hand to strife, it is because I would have you, if I could so persuade you, hate in yourself the sins of vanity and wrath, by which you are most easily beset. I have spoken on the topic more to alarm your own conscience, than to express my opinion. I know as well as my father, that in these for-

lorn and desperate days, the whole customs of our nation, nay, of every Christian nation, may be quoted in favour of bloody quarrels for trifling causes; of the taking deadly and deep revenge for slight offences; and the slaughter of each other for emulation of honour, or often in mere sport. But I know, that for all these things we shall one day be called into judgment; and fain would I convince thee, my brave and generous friend, to listen oftener to the dictates of thy good heart, and take less pride in the strength and dexterity of thy unsparing arm."

"I am—I am convinced, Catharine," exclaimed Henry; "thy words shall henceforward be a law to me. I have done enough, far too much, indeed, for proof of my bodily strength and courage; but it is only from you, Catharine, that I can learn a better way of thinking. Remember, my fair Valentine, that my ambition of distinction in arms, and my love of strife, if it can be called such, do not fight even-handed with my reason and my milder dispositions, but have their patrons and

sticklers to egg them on. Is there a quarrel,—and suppose that I, thinking on your counsels, am something loth to engage in it,—believe you I am left to decide between peace or war at my own choosing? Not so, by St Mary! there are a hundred round me to stir me on. 'Why, how now, Smith, is thy mainspring rusted,' says one. 'Jolly Henry is deaf on the quarrelling ear this morning,' says another. 'Stand to it, for the honour of Perth,' says my Lord the Provost. 'Harry against them for a gold noble,' cries your father, perhaps. Now, what can a poor fellow do, Catharine, when all are hallooing him on in the devil's name, and not a soul putting in a word on the other side?"

"Nay, I know the devil has factors enough to utter his wares," said Catharine; "but it is our duty to despise such idle arguments, though they may be pleaded even by those to whom we owe much love and honour."

"Then there are the minstrels, with their romaunts and ballads, which place all a man's praise in receiving and repaying hard blows. It is sad to tell, Catharine, how many of my

sins that Blind Harry the Minstrel hath to answer for. When I hit a downright blow, it is not, (so save me, St John!) to do any man injury, but only to strike as William Wallace struck."

The Minstrel's namesake spoke this in such a tone of rueful seriousness, that Catharine could scarce forbear smiling; but nevertheless she assured him that the danger of his own and other men's lives ought not for a moment to be weighed against such simple toys.

"Ay, but," replied Henry, emboldened by her smiles, "methinks now the good cause of peace would thrive all the better for an advocate. Suppose, for example, that when I am pressed and urged to lay hand on my weapon, I could have cause to recollect that there was a gentle and guardian angel at home, whose image would seem to whisper, 'Henry, do no violence; it is my hand which you crimson with blood—Henry, rush upon no idle danger; it is my breast which you expose to injury;' such thoughts would do more to restrain my mood, than if every monk in Perth should cry 'Hold thy hand, on pain of bell, book, and candle.'"

"If such a warning as could be given by the voice of sisterly affection can have weight in the debate," said Catharine, "do think, that in striking, you empurple this hand; that in receiving wounds, you harm this heart."

The Smith took courage at the sincerely affectionate tone in which these words were delivered.

"And wherefore not stretch your regard a degree beyond these cold limits? Why, since you are so kind and generous as to own some interest in the poor ignorant sinner before you, should you not at once adopt him as your scholar and your husband? Your father desires it; the town expects it; glovers and smiths are preparing their rejoicings; and you, only you, whose words are so fair and so kind, you will not give your consent!"

"Henry," said Catharine, in a low and tremulous voice, "believe me I should hold it my duty to comply with my father's commands, were there not obstacles invincible to the match which he proposes."

"Yet think—think but for a moment. I

have little to say for myself in comparison of you, who can both read and write. But then I wish to hear reading, and could listen to your sweet voice for ever. You love music, and I have been taught to play and sing as well as some minstrels. You love to be charitable, I have enough to give, and enough to keep; as large a daily alms as a deacon gives would never be missed by me. Your father gets old for daily toil; he would live with us, as I should truly hold him for my father also. I would be as chary of mixing in causeless strife, as of thrusting my hand into my own furnace; and if there came on us unlawful violence, its wares would be brought to an ill-chosen market."

"May you experience all the domestic happiness which you can conceive, Henry,—but with some one more happy than I am."

So spoke, or rather so sobbed, the Fair Maiden of Perth, who seemed choking in the attempt to restrain her tears.

"You hate me, then?" said the lover, after a pause.

"Heaven is my witness, No."

"Or you love some other better?"

"It is cruel to ask what it cannot avail you to know. But you are entirely mistaken."

"Yon wild-cat, Conachar, perhaps?" said Henry. "I have marked his looks——"

"You avail yourself of this painful situation to insult me, Henry, though I have little deserved it. Conachar is nothing to me, more than the trying to tame his wild spirit by instruction might lead me to take some interest in a mind abandoned to prejudices and passions, and therein, Henry, not unlike your own."

"It must then be some of these flaunting silk-worm Sirs about the court," said the armourer, his natural heat of temper kindling from disappointment and vexation; "some of those who think they carry it off through the height of their plumed bonnets and the jingle of their spurs. I would I knew which it was, that, leaving his natural mates, the painted and perfumed dames of the court, comes to take his prey among the simple maidens of the burgher craft. I would I knew but his name and surname!"

"Henry Smith," said Catharine, shaking off the weakness which seemed to threaten to overpower her a moment before, "this is the language of an ungrateful fool, or rather of a frantic madman. I have told you already, there was no one who stood, at the beginning of this conference, more high in my opinion, than he who is now losing ground with every word he utters, in the tone of unjust suspicion and senseless anger. You had no title to know even what I have told you; which, I pray you to observe, implies no preference to you over others, though it disowns any preference of another to you. It is enough you should be aware that there is as insuperable an objection to what you desire, as if an enchanter had a spell over my destiny."

"Spells may be broken by true men," said the Smith. "I would it were come to that. Thorbiorn, the Danish armourer, spoke of a spell he had for making breastplates, by singing a certain song while the iron was heating. I told him that his runic rhymes were no proof against the weapons which fought at Loncarty —what farther came of it it is needless to tell;

—but the corslet and the wearer, and the leech who salved his wound, know if Henry Gow can break a spell or no."

Catharine looked at him as if about to return an answer little approving of the exploit he had vaunted, which the downright Smith had not recollected, was of a kind that exposed him to her frequent censure. But ere she had given words to her thoughts, her father thrust his head in at the door.

"Henry," he said, "I must interrupt your more pleasing affairs, and request you to come into my working room in all speed, to consult about certain matters deeply affecting the weal of the burgh."

Henry, making his obeisance to Catharine, left the apartment upon her father's summons. Indeed it was probably in favour of their future friendly intercourse that they were parted on this occasion, at the turn which the conversation seemed likely to take. For as the wooer had begun to hold the refusal of the damsel as somewhat capricious and inexplicable after the degree of encouragement, which, in his opinion,

she had afforded; Catharine, on the other hand, considered him rather as an encroacher upon the grace which she had shown him, than one whose delicacy rendered him deserving of such favour.

But there was living in their bosoms towards each other a reciprocal kindness, which, on the termination of the dispute was sure to revive, inducing the maiden to forget her offended delicacy, and the lover his slighted warmth of passion.

CHAPTER VI.

This quarrel may draw blood another day.
Henry VI. Part I.

THE conclave of citizens appointed to meet for investigating the affray of the preceding evening, had now assembled. The work-room of Simon Glover was filled to crowding by personages of no little consequence, some of whom wore black velvet cloaks, and gold chains around their necks. They were, indeed, the fathers of the city; and there were bailies and deacons in the honoured number. There was an ireful and offended air of importance upon every brow, as they conversed together, rather in whisper, than aloud or in detail. Busiest among the busy, the little important assistant of the previous night, Oliver Proudfute by name, and bonnet-maker by profession, was bustling among

the crowd; much after the manner of the sea-gull, which flutters, screams, and sputters most at the commencement of a gale of wind, though one can hardly conceive what the bird has better to do than to fly to its nest, and remain quiet till the gale is over.

Be that as it may, Master Proudfute was in the midst of the crowd, his fingers upon every one's button, and his mouth in every man's ear, embracing such as were near to his own stature, that he might more closely and mysteriously utter his sentiments; and standing on tip-toe, and supporting himself by the cloak-collars of tall men, that he might dole out to them also the same share of information. He felt himself one of the heroes of the affair, being conscious of the dignity of superior information on the subject as an eye-witness, and much disposed to push his connexion with the scuffle a few points beyond the modesty of truth. It cannot be said his communications were in especial curious and important, consisting chiefly of such assertions as these :—

" It is all true, by St John. I was there

and saw it myself—was the first to run to the fray; and if it had not been for me and another stout fellow, who came in about the same time, they had broken into Simon Glover's house, cut his throat, and carried his daughter off to the mountains. It is too evil usage—not to be suffered, neighbour Crookshank,—not to be endured, neighbour Glass—not to be borne, neighbours Balneaves, Rollock, and Chrysteson. It was a mercy that I and that stout fellow came in—Was it not, neighbour and worthy Bailie Craigdallie?"

These speeches were dispersed by the busy bonnet-maker into sundry ears. Bailie Craigdallie, a portly guild-brother, the same who had advised the prorogation of their civic council to the present place and hour, a big, burly, good-looking man, shook the deacon from his cloak with pretty much the grace with which a large horse shrugs off the importunate fly that has beset him for ten minutes, and exclaimed, "Silence, good citizens; here comes Simon Glover, in whom no man ever saw falsehood. We will hear the outrage from his own mouth."

Simon being called upon to tell his tale, did so with obvious embarrassment, which he imputed to a reluctance that the burgh should be put in deadly feud with any one upon his account. It was, he dared to say, a masking or revel on the part of the young gallants about court; and the worst that might come of it would be, that he would put iron stancheons on his daughter's window, in case of such another frolic.

"Why, then, if this was a mere masking or mummery," said Craigdallie, "our townsman, Harry of the Wynd, did far wrong to cut off a gentleman's hand for such a harmless pleasantry, and the town may be brought to a heavy fine for it, unless we secure the person of the mutilator."

"Our Lady forbid," said the Glover. "Did you know what I do, you would be as much afraid of handling this matter, as if it were glowing iron. But, since you will needs put your fingers in the fire, truth must be spoken. And come what will, I must say, that the matter might have ended ill for me and mine,

but for the opportune assistance of Henry Gow, the armourer, well known to you all."

"And mine also was not awanting," said Oliver Proudfute, "though I do not profess to be utterly so good a swordsman as our neighbour, Henry Gow.—You saw me, neighbour Glover, at the beginning of the fray?"

"I saw you after the end of it, neighbour," answered the Glover, drily.

"True, true; I had forgot you were in your house while the blows were going, and could not survey who were dealing them."

"Peace, neighbour Proudfute; I prithee, peace," said Craigdallie, who was obviously tired of the tuneless screeching of the worthy deacon.

"There is something mysterious here," said the Bailie; "but I think I spy the secret. Our friend Simon is, as you all know, a peaceful man, and one that will rather sit down with wrong, than put a friend, or say a neighbourhood, in danger, to seek his redress. Thou, Henry, who art never wanting where the burgh needs a defender, tell us what *thou* knowest of this matter."

Our Smith told his story to the same purpose which we have already related; and the meddling maker of bonnets added as before, "And thou sawest me there, honest Smith, didst thou not?"

"Not I, in good faith, neighbour," answered Henry; "but you are a little man, you know, and I might overlook you."

This reply produced a laugh at Oliver's expense, who laughed for company, but added, "I was one of the foremost to the rescue for all that."

"Why, where wert thou then, neighbour?" said the Smith; "for I saw you not, and I would have given the worth of the best suit of armour I ever wrought to have seen as stout a fellow as thou at my elbow."

"I was no farther off, however, honest Smith; and whilst thou wert laying on blows as if on an anvil, I was parrying those that the rest of the villains aimed at thee behind thy back; and that is the cause thou sawest me not."

"I have heard of Smiths of old time who had but one eye," said Henry. "I have two,

but they are both set in my forehead, and so I could not see behind my back, neighbour."

"The truth is, however," persevered Master Oliver, "there I was, and I will give Master Bailie my account of the matter; for the Smith and I were first up to the fray."

"Enough at present," said the Bailie, waving to Master Proudfute an injunction of silence. "The precognition of Simon Glover and Henry Gow would bear out a matter less worthy of belief.—And now, my masters, your opinion what should be done. Here are all our burgher rights broken through and insulted, and you may well fancy that it is by some man of power, since no less dared have attempted such an outrage. My masters, it is hard on flesh and blood to submit to this. The laws have framed us of lower rank than the princes and nobles, yet it is against reason to suppose that we will suffer our houses to be broken into, and the honour of our women insulted, without some redress."

"It is not to be endured," answered the citizens, unanimously.

Here Simon Glover interfered with a very

anxious and ominous countenance. "I hope still that all was not meant so ill as it seemed to us, my worthy neighbours; and I for one would cheerfully forgive the alarm and disturbance to my poor house, providing the fair city were not brought into jeopardy for me. I beseech you to consider who are to be our judges that are to hear the case, and give or refuse redress. I speak among neighbours and friends, and therefore I speak openly. The King, God bless him! is so broken in mind and body, that he will but turn us over to some great man amongst his councillors, who shall be in favour for the time—Perchance he will refer us to his brother the Duke of Albany, who will make our petition for righting of our wrongs the pretence for squeezing money out of us."

"We will none of Albany for our judge," answered the meeting with the same unanimity as before.

"Or perhaps," added Simon, "he will bid the Duke of Rothsay take charge of it; and the wild young prince will regard the outrage as something for his gay companions to scoff at, and his minstrels to turn into a song."

"Away with Rothsay! he is too gay to be our judge," again exclaimed the citizens.

Simon, emboldened by seeing he was reaching the point he aimed at, yet pronouncing the dreaded name with a half whisper, next added, "Would you like the Black Douglas better to deal with?"

There was no answer for a minute. They looked on each other with fallen countenances and blanched lips. But Henry Smith spoke out boldly, and in a decided voice, the sentiments which all felt, but none else dared give words to—

"The Black Douglas to judge betwixt a burgher and a gentleman, nay, a nobleman for all I know or care?—The black devil of hell sooner! You are mad, Father Simon, so much as to name so wild a proposal."

There was again a silence of fear and uncertainty, which was at length broken by Bailie Craigdallie, who, looking very significantly to the speaker, replied, "You are confident in a stout doublet, neighbour Smith, or you would not talk so boldly."

"I am confident of a good heart under my doublet, such as it is, Bailie," answered the undaunted Henry; "and though I speak but little, my mouth shall never be padlocked by any noble of them all."

"Wear a thick doublet, good Henry, or do not speak so loud," reiterated the Bailie, in the same significant tone. "There are Border men in the town who wear the bloody heart on their shoulder.—But all this is no rede. What shall we do?"

"Short rede, good rede," said the Smith. "Let us to our Provost, and demand his countenance and assistance."

A murmur of applause went through the party, and Oliver Proudfute exclaimed, "That is what I have been saying for this half hour, and not one of ye would listen to me. Let us go to our Provost, said I. He is a gentleman himself, and ought to come between the burgh and the nobles in all matters."

"Hush, neighbours, hush; be wary what you say or do," said a thin meagre figure of a man, whose diminutive person seemed still more

reduced in size, and more assimilated to a shadow, by his efforts to assume an extreme degree of humility, and make himself, to suit his argument, look meaner yet, and yet more insignificant than nature had made him.

"Pardon me," said he; "I am but a poor Pottingar. Nevertheless, I have been bred in Paris, and learned my humanities and my *cursus medendi* as well as some that call themselves learned leeches. Methinks I can tent this wound, and treat it with emollients. Here is our friend Simon Glover, who is, as you all know, a man of worship. Think you he would not be the most willing of us all to pursue harsh courses here, since his family honour is so nearly concerned? And since he blenches away from the charge against these same revellers, consider if he may not have some good reason more than he cares to utter for letting the matter sleep. It is not for me to put my finger on the sore; but, alack! we all know that young maidens are what I call fugitive essences. Suppose now, an honest maiden—I mean in all innocence—leaves her window unlatched on St Valentine's morn,

that some gallant cavalier may—in all honesty, I mean—become her Valentine for the season; and suppose the gallant be discovered, may she not scream out as if the visit were unexpected, and—and—bray all this in a mortar, and then consider, will it be a matter to place the town in feud for?"

The Pottingar delivered his opinion in a most insinuating manner; but he seemed to shrink into something less than his natural tenuity when he saw the blood rise in the old cheeks of Simon Glover, and inflame to the temples the complexion of the redoubted Smith. The last, stepping forward, and turning a stern look on the alarmed Pottingar, broke out as follows:—"Thou walking skeleton! thou asthmatic gallipot! thou poisoner by profession! if I thought that the puff of vile breath thou hast left could blight for the tenth part of a minute the fair fame of Catharine Glover, I would pound thee, quacksalver! in thine own mortar, and beat up thy wretched carrion with flower of brimstone, the only real medicine in thy booth, to make a salve to rub mangy hounds with!"

"Hold, son Henry, hold!" cried the Glover, in a tone of authority,—"no man has title to speak of this matter but me.—Worshipful Bailie Craigdallie, since such is the construction that is put upon my patience, I am willing to pursue this riot to the uttermost; and though the issue may prove that we had better have been patient, you will all see that my Catharine hath not by any lightness or folly of hers afforded grounds for this great scandal."

The Bailie also interposed. "Neighbour Henry," said he, "we came here to consult, and not to quarrel. As one of the fathers of the fair city, I command thee to forego all evil will and maltalent you may have against Master Pottingar Dwining."

"He is too poor a creature, Bailie," said Henry Gow, "for me to harbour feud with—I that could destroy him and his booth with one blow of my fore-hammer."

"Peace, then, and hear me," said the official. "We all are as much believers in the honour of the Fair Maiden of Perth, as in that of our Blessed Lady." Here he crossed himself devout-

ly. "But touching our appeal to our Provost, are you agreed, neighbours, to put matter like this into our Provost's hand, being against a powerful noble, as is to be feared?"

"The Provost being himself a nobleman—" squeaked the Pottingar, in some measure released from his terror by the intervention of the Bailie. "God knows, I speak not to the disparagement of an honourable gentleman, whose forebears have held the office he now holds for many years——"

"By free choice of the citizens of Perth," said the Smith, interrupting the speaker with the tones of his deep and decisive voice.

"Ay, surely," said the disconcerted orator, "by the voice of the citizens. How else?—I pray you, friend Smith, interrupt me not. I speak to our worthy and eldest Bailie, Craigdallie, according to my poor mind. I say that, come amongst us how he will, still this Sir Patrick Charteris is a nobleman, and hawks will not pick hawks' eyes out. He may well bear us out in a feud with the Highlandmen, and do the part of our Provost and leader against

them; but whether he that himself wears silk will take our part against broidered cloak and cloth of gold, though he may do so against tartan and Irish frieze, is something to be questioned. Take a fool's advice. We have saved our Maiden, of whom I never meant to speak harm, as truly I knew none. They have lost one man's hand at least, thanks to Harry Smith——"

"And to me," added the little important bonnet-maker.

"And to Oliver Proudfute, as he tells us," continued the Pottingar, who contested no man's claim to glory, provided he was not himself compelled to tread the perilous paths which lead to it. "I say, neighbours, since they have left a hand as a pledge they will never come in Couvrefew street again, why, in my simple mind, we were best to thank our stout townsman, and the town having the honour, and these rake-hells the loss, that we should hush the matter up, and say no more about it."

These pacific counsels had their effect with some of the citizens, who began to nod and look exceedingly wise upon the advocate of ac-

quiescence, with whom, notwithstanding the offence so lately given, Simon Glover seemed also to agree in opinion. But not so Henry Smith, who, seeing the consultation at a stand, took up the speech in his usual downright manner.

"I am neither the oldest nor the richest among you, neighbours, and I am not sorry for it. Years will come, if one lives to see them; and I can win and spend my penny like another, by the blaze of the furnace and the wind of the bellows. But no man ever saw me sit down with wrong done in word or deed to our fair town, if man's tongue and man's hand could right it. Neither will I sit down with this outrage, if I can help it. I will go to the Provost myself, if no one will go with me; he is a knight, it is true, and a gentleman of free and true-born blood, as we all know, since Wallace's time, who settled his great-grandsire amongst us. But if he were the proudest nobleman in the land, he is the Provost of Perth, and for his own honour must see the freedoms and immunities of the burgh preserved—ay, and I know he will—I have made a steel dou-

blet for him, and have a good guess at the kind of heart that it was meant to cover."

"Surely," said Bailie Craigdallie, "it would be to no purpose to stir at court without Sir Patrick Charteris's countenance; the ready answer would be, Go to your Provost, you borrel loons. So, neighbours and townsmen, if you will stand by my side, I and our Pottingar Dwining will repair presently to Kinfauns, with Sim Glover, the jolly Smith, and gallant Oliver Proudfute, for witnesses to the onslaught, and speak with Sir Patrick Charteris, in name of the Fair Town."

"Nay," said the peaceful man of medicine, "leave me behind, I pray you; I lack audacity to speak before a belted knight."

"Never regard that, neighbour, you must go," said Bailie Craigdallie. "The town hold me a hot-headed carle for a man of threescore—Sim Glover is the offended party—we all know that Harry Gow spoils more harnesses with his sword, than he makes with his hammer—and our neighbour Proudfute,—who, take his own word, is at the beginning and end of every

fray in Perth,—is of course a man of action. We must have at least one advocate amongst us for peace and quietness; and thou, Pottingar, must be the man. Away with you, sirs, get your boots and your beasts—horse and hattock, I say—and let us meet at the East Port—that is, if it is your pleasure, neighbours, to trust us with the matter."

"There can be no better rede, and we will all avouch it," said the citizens. "If the Provost take our part, as the Fair Town hath a right to expect, we may bell-the-cat with the best of them."

"It is well, then, neighbours," answered the Bailie; "so said, so shall be done. Meanwhile, I have called the whole town-council together about this hour, and I have little doubt," looking around the company, "that as so many of them who are in this place have resolved to consult with our Provost, the rest will be compliant to the same resolution. And therefore, neighbours, and good burghers of the fair city of Perth—horse and hattock, as I said before, and meet me at the East Port."

A general acclamation concluded the sitting

of this species of privy council, or Lords of the Articles; and they dispersed, the deputation to prepare for the journey, and the rest to tell their impatient wives and daughters of the measures they had taken to render their chambers safe in future, against the intrusion of gallants at unseasonable hours.

While nags are saddling, and the town-council debating, or rather putting in form what the leading members of their body had already adopted, it may be necessary, for the information of some readers, to state in distinct terms what is more circuitously intimated in the course of the former discussion.

It was the custom at this period, when the strength of the feudal aristocracy controlled the rights, and frequently insulted the privileges, of the royal burghs of Scotland, that the latter, where it was practicable, often chose their Provost, or Chief Magistrate, not out of the order of the merchants, shopkeepers, and citizens, who inhabited the town itself, and filled up the roll of the ordinary magistracy, but elected to that pre-eminent state some powerful nobleman, or

baron, in the neighbourhood of the burgh, who was expected to stand their friend at court in such matters as concerned their common weal, and to lead their civic militia to fight, whether in general battle or in private feud, reinforcing them with his own feudal retainers. This protection was not always gratuitous. The Provosts sometimes availed themselves of their situation to an unjustifiable degree, and obtained grants of lands and tenements belonging to the common good, or public property of the burgh, and thus made the citizens pay dear for the countenance which they afforded. Others were satisfied to receive the powerful aid of the townsmen in their own feudal quarrels, with such other marks of respect and benevolence, as the burgh over which they presided were willing to gratify them with, in order to secure their active services in case of necessity. The Baron, who was the regular protector of a royal burgh, accepted such free-will offerings without scruple, and repaid them by defending the rights of the town, by arguments in the council, and by bold deeds in the field.

The citizens of the town, or, as they loved better to call it, the Fair City of Perth, had for several generations found a protector and Provost of this kind in the knightly family of Charteris, Lords of Kinfauns, in the neighbourhood of the burgh. It was scarce a century (in the time of Robert III.) since the first of this distinguished family had settled in the strong castle which now belonged to them, with the picturesque and fertile scenes adjoining to it. But the history of the first settler, chivalrous and romantic in itself, was calculated to facilitate the settlement of an alien, in the land in which his lot was cast. We relate it as it is given by an ancient and uniform tradition, which carries in it great indications of truth, and is warrant enough, perhaps, for its insertion in graver histories than the present.

During the brief career of the celebrated patriot Sir William Wallace, and when his arms had for a time expelled the English invaders from his native country, he is said to have undertaken a voyage to France, with a small band of trusty friends, to try what his presence

(for he was respected through all countries for his prowess) might do to induce the French monarch to send to Scotland a body of auxiliary forces, or other assistance, to aid the Scots in regaining their independence.

The Scottish Champion was on board a small vessel, and steering for the port of Dieppe, when a sail appeared in the distance, which the mariners regarded with doubt and apprehension, and at last with confusion and dismay. Wallace demanded to know what was the cause of their alarm. The captain of the ship informed him, that the tall vessel which was bearing down, with the purpose of boarding that which he commanded, was the ship of a celebrated rover, equally famed for his courage, strength of body, and successful piracies. It was commanded by a gentleman named Thomas de Longueville, a Frenchman by birth, but by practice one of those pirates who called themselves friends to the sea, and enemies to all who sailed upon that element. He attacked and plundered vessels of all nations, like one of the ancient Norse Sea-kings, as they were termed, whose dominion was

upon the mountain waves. The master added, that no vessel could escape the rover by flight, so speedy was the bark he commanded; and that no crew, however hardy, could hope to resist him, when, as was his usual mode of combat, he threw himself on board at the head of his followers.

Wallace smiled sternly, while the master of the ship, with alarm in his countenance, and tears in his eyes, described to him the certainty of their being captured by the Red Rover, a name given to De Longueville, because he usually displayed the blood-red flag, which he had now hoisted.

"I will clear the narrow seas of this rover," said Wallace.

Then calling together some ten or twelve of his own followers, Boyd, Kerlie, Seton, and others, to whom the dust of the most desperate battle was like the breath of life, he commanded them to arm themselves, and lie flat upon the deck, so as to be out of sight. He ordered the mariners below, excepting such as were absolutely necessary to manage the vessel; and he

gave the master instructions, upon pain of death, so to steer, as that, while the vessel had an appearance of attempting to fly, he should in fact permit the Red Rover to come up with them and do his worst. Wallace himself then lay down on the deck, that nothing might be seen which could intimate any purpose of resistance. In a quarter of an hour De Longueville's vessel ran on board that of the Champion, and the Red Rover casting out grappling irons to make sure of his prize, jumped on the deck in complete armour, followed by his men, who gave a terrible shout, as if victory had been already secured. But the armed Scots started up at once, and the rover found himself unexpectedly engaged with men accustomed to consider victory as secure, when they were only opposed as one to two or three. Wallace himself rushed on the pirate captain, and a dreadful strife began betwixt them with such fury, that the others suspended their own battle to look on, and seemed by common consent to refer the issue of the strife to the fate of the combat between the two

chiefs. The pirate fought as well as man could do; but Wallace's strength was beyond that of ordinary mortals. He dashed the sword from the rover's hand, and placed him in such peril, that, to avoid being cut down, he was fain to close with the Scottish Champion, in hopes of overpowering him in the grapple. In this also he was foiled. They fell on the deck, locked in each other's arms, but the Frenchman fell undermost; and Wallace, fixing his grasp upon his gorget, compressed it so closely, notwithstanding it was made of the finest steel, that the blood gushed from his eyes, nose, and mouth, and he was only able to ask for quarter by signs. His men threw down their weapons and begged for mercy, when they saw their leader thus severely handled. The victor granted them all their lives, but took possession of their vessel, and detained them prisoners.

When he came in sight of the French harbour, Wallace alarmed the place by displaying the rover's colours, as if De Longueville was coming to pillage the town. The bells were rung backward; horns were blown, and the citizens

were hurrying to arms, when the scene changed. The Scottish Lion on his shield of gold was raised above the piratical flag, and announced that the Champion of Scotland was approaching, like a falcon with his prey in his clutch. He landed with his prisoner, and carried him to the court of France, where, at Wallace's request, the robberies which the pirate had committed were forgiven, and the King even conferred the honour of knighthood on Sir Thomas de Longueville, and offered to take him into his service. But the rover had contracted such a friendship for his generous victor, that he insisted on uniting his fortunes with those of Wallace, with whom he returned to Scotland, and fought by his side in many a bloody battle, where the prowess of Sir Thomas de Longueville was remarked as inferior to that of none, save of his heroic conqueror. His fate also was more fortunate than that of his patron. Being distinguished by the beauty as well as strength of his person, he rendered himself so acceptable to a young lady, heiress of the ancient family of Charteris, that she chose him for her husband, bestowing on

him with her hand the fair baronial Castle of Kinfauns, and the domains annexed to it. Their descendants took the name of Charteris, as connecting themselves with their maternal ancestors, the ancient proprietors of the property, though the name of Thomas de Longueville was equally honoured amongst them; and the large two-handed sword with which he mowed the ranks of war, was, and is still, preserved among the family muniments. Another account is, that the family name of De Longueville himself was Charteris. The estate afterwards passed to a family of Blairs, and is now the property of Lord Gray.

These barons of Kinfauns, from father to son, held, for several generations, the office of Provost of Perth; the vicinity of the castle and town rendering it a very convenient arrangement for mutual support. The Sir Patrick of this history had more than once led out the men of Perth to battles and skirmishes with the restless Highland depredators, and with other enemies, foreign and domestic. True it is, he used sometimes to be weary of the slight and frivo-

lous complaints unnecessarily brought before him, and in which he was requested to interest himself. Hence he had sometimes incurred the charge of being too proud as a nobleman, or too indolent as a man of wealth, and one who was too much addicted to the pleasures of the field, and the exercise of feudal hospitality, to bestir himself upon all and every occasion when the Fair Town would have desired his active interference. But notwithstanding that this occasioned some slight murmuring, the citizens, upon any serious cause of alarm, were wont to rally around their Provost, and were warmly supported by him both in council and action.

CHAPTER VII.

The character and quality of Sir Patrick Charteris, the Provost of Perth, being such as we have sketched in the last chapter, let us now return to the deputation which was in the act of rendezvousing at the East Port, in order to wait upon that dignitary with their complaints, at Kinfauns.

And first appeared Simon Glover, on a pacing palfrey, which had sometimes enjoyed the honour of bearing the fairer person as well as the lighter weight of his beautiful daughter. His cloak was muffled round the lower part of his face, as a sign to his friends not to interrupt him by any questions while he passed through the streets, and partly, perhaps, on account of the coldness of the weather. The deepest anxiety

was seated on his brow, as if the more he meditated on the matter he was engaged in, the more difficult and perilous it appeared. He only greeted by silent gestures his friends as they came to the rendezvous.

A strong black horse, of the old Galloway breed, of an under size, not exceeding fourteen hands, but high-shouldered, strong-limbed, well-coupled, and round-barrelled, bore to the East Port the gallant Smith. A judge of the animal might see in his eye a spark of that vicious temper which is frequently the accompaniment of the form that is most vigorous and enduring; but the weight, the hand, and the seat of the rider, added to the late regular exercise of a long journey, had subdued its stubbornness for the present. He was accompanied by the honest Bonnet-maker, who, being, as the reader is aware, a little round man, had planted himself like a red pin-cushion, (for he was wrapped in a scarlet cloak, over which he had slung a hawking pouch,) on the top of a great saddle, which he might be said rather to be perched upon than

to bestride. The saddle and the man were girthed on the ridge-bone of a great trampling Flemish mare, with a nose turned up in the air like a camel, a huge fleece of hair at each foot, and every hoof full as large in circumference as a frying-pan. The contrast between the beast and the rider was so extremely extraordinary, that whilst chance passengers contented themselves with wondering how he got up, his friends were anticipating with sorrow the perils which must attend his coming down again; for the high-seated horseman's feet did not by any means come beneath the laps of the saddle. He had associated himself to the Smith, whose motions he had watched for the purpose of joining him; for it was Oliver Proudfute's opinion, that men of action showed to most advantage when beside each other; and he was delighted when some wag of the lower class had gravity enough to cry out, without laughing outright, "There goes the pride of Perth—there go the slashing craftsmen, the jolly Smith of the Wynd, and the bold Bonnet-maker!"

It is true, the fellow who gave this all-hail thrust his tongue in his cheek to some scape-graces like himself; but as the Bonnet-maker did not see this by-play, he generously threw him a silver penny to encourage his respect for martialists. This munificence occasioned their being followed by a crowd of boys, laughing and hallooing, until Henry Smith, turning back, threatened to switch the foremost of them; a resolution which they did not wait to see put in execution.

"Here are we the witnesses," said the little man on the large horse, as they joined Simon Glover at the East Port; "but where are they that should back us? Ah, brother Henry! authority is a load for an ass rather than a spirited horse; it would but clog the motions of such young fellows as you and me."

"I could well wish to see you bear ever so little of that same weight, worthy Master Proudfute," replied Henry Gow, "were it but to keep you firm in the saddle; for you bounce about as if you were dancing a jig on your seat, without any help from your legs."

"Ay, ay; I raise myself in my stirrups to avoid the jolting. She is cruelly hard set this mare of mine; but she has carried me in field and forest, and through some passages that were something perilous; so Jezabel and I part not —I call her Jezabel, after the Princess of Castille."

"Isabel, I suppose you mean," answered the Smith.

"Ay—Isabel, or Jezabel,—all the same, you know. But here comes Bailie Craigdallie at last, with that poor, creeping, cowardly creature the Pottingar. They have brought two town-officers with their partizans, to guard their fair persons, I suppose.—If there is one thing I hate more than another, it is such a sneaking varlet as that Dwining!"

"Have a care he does not hear you say so," said the Smith. "I tell thee, Bonnet-maker, that there is more danger in yonder slight wasted anatomy, than in twenty stout fellows like yourself."

"Pshaw! Bully Smith, you are but jesting with me," said Oliver,—softening his voice, however, and looking towards the Pottingar, as if

to discover in what limb or lineament of his wasted face and form lay any appearance of the menaced danger; and his examination reassuring him, he answered boldly, "Blades and bucklers, man, I would stand the feud of a dozen such as Dwining. What could he do to any man with blood in his veins?"

"He could give him a dose of physic," answered the Smith, drily.

They had no time for further colloquy, for Bailie Craigdallie called to them to take the road to Kinfauns, and himself showed the example. As they advanced at a leisurely pace, the discourse turned on the reception which they were to expect from their Provost, and the interest which he was likely to take in the aggression which they complained of. The Glover seemed particularly desponding, and talked more than once, in a manner which implied a wish that they would yet consent to let the matter rest. He did not speak out very plainly, however, fearful, perhaps, of the malignant interpretation which might be derived from any appearance of his flinching from the assertion of his daughter's reputation. Dwining seemed to agree with

him in opinion, but spoke more cautiously than in the morning.

"After all," said the Bailie, "when I think of all the propines and good gifts which have passed from the good town to my Lord Provost's, I cannot think he will be backward to show himself. More than one lusty boat, laden with Bourdeaux wine, has left the South Shore to discharge its burden under the Castle of Kinfauns. I have some right to speak of that, who was the merchant importer."

"And," said Dwining, with his squeaking voice, "I could speak of delicate confections, curious comfits, loaves of wastel bread, and even cakes of that rare and delicious condiment which men call sugar, that have gone thither to help out a bridal banquet, or a kirstening feast, or such like. But alack, Bailie Craigdallie, wine is drunk, comfits are eaten, and the gift is forgotten when the flavour is past away. Alas, neighbour! the banquet of last Christmas is gone like the last year's snow."

"But there have been gloves full of gold pieces," said the Magistrate.

"I should know that who wrought them,"

said Simon, whose professional recollections still mingled with whatever else might occupy his mind. " One was a hawking glove for my lady. I made it something wide. Her ladyship found no fault, in consideration of the intended lining."

" Well, go to," said Bailie Craigdallie, " the less I lie; and if these are not to the fore, it is the Provost's fault, and not the town's; they could neither be eat nor drunk in the shape in which he got them."

" I could speak of a brave armour too," said the Smith; " but, *cogan na schie !* as John Highlandman says, I think the Knight of Kinfauns will do his devoir by the burgh in peace or war; and it is needless to be reckoning the town's good deeds, till we see him thankless for them."

" So say I," cried our friend Proudfute, from the top of his mare. " We roystering blades never bear so base a mind as to count for wine and walnuts with a friend like Sir Patrick Charteris. Nay, trust me, a good woodsman like Sir Patrick will prize the right of hunting and

sporting over the lands of the burgh as an high privilege, and one which, his Majesty the King's Grace excepted, is neither granted to lord nor loon save to our Provost alone."

As the Bonnet-maker spoke, there was heard on the left hand, the cry of, "*So so—waw waw —haw*," being the shout of a falconer to his hawk.

"Methinks yonder is a fellow using the privilege you mention, who, from his appearance, is neither King nor Provost," said the Smith.

"Ay, marry, I see him," said the Bonnet-maker, who imagined the occasion presented a prime occasion to win honour. "Thou and I, jolly Smith, will prick towards him and put him to the question."

"Have with you, then," cried the Smith; and his companion spurred his mare and went off, never doubting that Gow was at his heels.

But Craigdallie caught Henry's horse by the reins. "Stand fast by the standard," he said; "let us see the luck of our light horseman. If he procures himself a broken pate, he will be quieter for the rest of the day."

"From what I already see," said the Smith, "he may easily come by such a boon. Yonder fellow who stops so impudently to look at us, as if he were engaged in the most lawful sport in the world—I guess him, by his trotting hobbler, his rusty head-piece with the cock's feather, and long two-handed sword, to be the follower of some of the southland lords—men who live so near the Southron, that the black jack is never off their backs, and who are as free of their blows as they are light in their fingers."

Whilst they were thus speculating on the issue of the rencounter, the valiant Bonnet-maker began to pull up Jezabel, in order that the Smith, who he still concluded was close behind, might overtake him, and either advance first, or at least abreast of himself. But when he saw him at a hundred yards' distance, standing composedly with the rest of the group, the flesh of the champion, like that of the old Spanish general, began to tremble, in anticipation of the dangers into which his own venturous spirit was about to involve it. Yet the consciousness of being countenanced by the neigh-

bourhood of so many friends; the hopes that the appearance of such odds must intimidate the single intruder, and the shame of abandoning an enterprise in which he had volunteered, and when so many persons must witness his disgrace, surmounted the strong inclination which prompted him to wheel Jezabel to the right about, and return to the friends whose protection he had quitted, as fast as her legs could carry them. He accordingly continued his direction towards the stranger, who increased his alarm considerably, by putting his little nag in motion, and riding to meet him at a brisk trot. On observing this apparently offensive movement, our hero looked over his left shoulder more than once, as if reconnoitring the ground for a retreat, and in the meanwhile came to a decided halt. But the Philistine was upon him ere the Bonnet-maker could decide whether to fight or fly, and a very ominous-looking Philistine he was. His figure was gaunt and lathy, his visage marked by two or three ill-favoured scars, and the whole man had much the air

of one accustomed to say, "Stand and deliver," to a true man.

This individual began the discourse, by exclaiming, in tones as sinister as his looks,—"The devil catch you for a cuckoo, why do you ride across the moor to spoil my sport?"

"Worthy stranger," said our friend, in the tone of pacific remonstrance, "I am Oliver Proudfute, a burgess of Perth, and a man of substance; and yonder is the worshipful Adam Craigdallie, the oldest Bailie of the burgh, with the fighting Smith of the Wynd, and three or four armed men more, who desire to know your name, and how you come to take your pleasure over these lands belonging to the burgh of Perth—although, natheless, I will answer for them, it is not their wish to quarrel with a gentleman, or stranger, for any accidental trespass; only it is their use and wont not to grant such leave, unless it is duly asked; and—and—therefore I desire to know your name, worthy sir."

The grim and loathly aspect with which the falconer had regarded Oliver Proudfute during

his harangue, had greatly disconcerted him, and altogether altered the character of the inquiry which, with Henry Gow to back him, he would probably have thought most fitting for the occasion.

The stranger replied to it, modified as it was, with a most inauspicious grin, which the scars of his visage made appear still more repulsive. "You want to know my name?—My name is the Devil's Dick of Hellgarth, well known in Annandale for a gentle Johnstone. I follow the stout Laird of Wamphray, who rides with his kinsman the redoubted Lord of Johnstone, who is banded with the doughty Earl of Douglas; and the Earl and the Lord, and the Laird and I the Esquire, fly our hawks where we find our game, and ask no man whose ground we ride over."

"I will do your message, sir," replied Oliver Proudfute, meekly enough; for he began to be very desirous to get free of the embassy which he had so rashly undertaken, and was in the act of turning his horse's head, when the Annandale man added,—

"And take you this to boot, to keep you in mind that you met the Devil's Dick, and to teach you another time to beware how you spoil the sport of any one who wears the flying spur on his shoulder."

With these words he applied two or three smart blows of his riding-rod upon the luckless Bonnet-maker's head and person. Some of them lighted upon Jezabel, who, turning sharply round, laid her rider upon the moor, and galloped back towards the party of citizens.

Proudfute, thus overthrown, began to cry for assistance in no very manly voice, and almost in the same breath to whimper for mercy; for his antagonist, dismounting almost as soon as he fell, offered a whinger, or large wood knife, to his throat, while he rifled the pockets of the unlucky citizen, and even examined his hawking bag, swearing two or three grisly oaths, that he would have what it contained, since the wearer had interrupted his sport. He pulled the belt rudely off, terrifying the prostrate Bonnet-maker still more by the regardless violence which he used, as, instead of taking the pains to unbuckle

the strap, he drew till the fastening gave way. But apparently it contained nothing to his mind. He threw it carelessly from him, and at the same time suffered the dismounted cavalier to rise, while he himself remounted his hobbler, and looked towards the rest of Oliver's party, who were now advancing.

When they had seen their delegate overthrown, there was some laughter; so much had the vaunting humour of the Bonnet-maker prepared his friends to rejoice, when, as Henry Smith termed it, they saw their Oliver meet with a Rowland. But when the Bonnet-maker's adversary was seen to bestride him, and handle him in the manner described, the armourer could hold out no longer. "Please you, good Master Bailie, I cannot endure to see our townsman beaten and rifled, and like to be murdered before us all. It reflects upon the Fair Town; and if it is neighbour Proudfute's misfortune, it is our shame. I must to his rescue."

"We will all go to his rescue," answered Bailie Craigdallie: "but let no man strike without order from me. We have more feuds on

our hands, it is to be feared, than we have strength to bring to good end. And therefore I charge you all, more especially you, Henry of the Wynd, in the name of the Fair City, that you make no stroke but in self-defence." They all advanced, therefore, in a body; and the appearance of such a number drove the plunderer from his booty. He stood at gaze, however, at some distance, like the wolf, which, though it retreats before the dogs, cannot be brought to absolute flight.

Henry, seeing this state of things, spurred his horse and advanced far before the rest of the party, up towards the scene of Oliver Proudfute's misfortune. His first task was to catch Jezabel by the flowing rein, and his next to lead her to meet her discomfited master, who was crippling towards him, his clothes much soiled with his fall, his eyes streaming with tears, from pain as well as mortification, and altogether exhibiting an aspect so unlike the spruce and dapper importance of his ordinary appearance, that the honest Smith felt compassion for the little

man, and some remorse at having left him exposed to such disgrace. All men, I believe, enjoy an ill-natured joke. The difference is, that an ill-natured person can drink out to very dregs the amusement which it affords, while the better-moulded mind soon loses the sense of the ridiculous in sympathy for the pain of the sufferer.

"Let me pitch you up to your saddle again, neighbour," said the Smith, dismounting at the same time, and assisting Oliver to scramble into his war-saddle, as a monkey might have done.

"May God forgive you, neighbour Smith, for not backing of me! I would not have believed in it, though fifty credible witnesses had sworn it of you."

Such were the first words, spoken in sorrow more than anger, by which the dismayed Oliver vented his feelings.

"The Bailie kept hold of my horse by the bridle; and besides," Henry continued, with a smile, which even his compassion could not suppress, "I thought you would have accused me of diminishing your honour, if I brought you

aid against a single man. But cheer up! the villain took foul odds of you, your horse not being well at command."

"That is true—that is true," said Oliver, eagerly catching at the apology.

"And yonder stands the faitour, rejoicing at the mischief he has done, and triumphing in your overthrow, like the King in the romance, who played upon the fiddle whilst a city was burning. Come thou with me, and thou shalt see how we will handle him—Nay, fear not that I will desert thee this time."

So saying, he caught Jezabel by the rein, and galloping alongside of her, without giving Oliver time to express a negative, he rushed toward the Devil's Dick, who had halted on the top of a rising ground at some distance. The gentle Johnstone, however, either that he thought the contest unequal, or that he had fought enough for the day, snapping his fingers, and throwing his hand out with an air of defiance, spurred his horse into a neighbouring bog, through which he seemed to flutter like a wild duck, swinging his lure round his head,

and whistling to his hawk all the while, though any other horse and rider must have been instantly bogged up to the saddle-girths.

"There goes a thorough-bred moss-trooper," said the Smith. "That fellow will fight or flee as suits his humour, and there is no use to pursue him, any more than to hunt a wild goose. He has got your purse, I doubt me, for they seldom leave off till they are full-handed."

"Ye—ye—yes," said Proudfute, in a melancholy tone; "he has got my purse—but there is less matter since he hath left the hawking-bag."

"Nay, the hawking-bag had been an emblem of personal victory, to be sure—a trophy, as the minstrels call it."

"There is more in it than that, friend," said Oliver, significantly.

"Why, that is well, neighbour; I love to hear you speak in your own scholarly tone again. Cheer up, you have seen the villain's back, and regained the trophies you had lost when taken at advantage."

"Ah, Henry Gow—Henry Gow," said the

Bonnet-maker, and stopped short with a deep sigh, nearly amounting to a groan.

"What is the matter?" asked his friend; "what is it you vex yourself about now?"

"I have some suspicion, my dearest friend, Henry Smith, that the villain fled for fear of you, not of me!"

"Do not think so," replied the armourer; "he saw two men and fled, and who can tell whether he fled for one or the other? Besides, he knows by experience your strength and activity; we all saw how you kicked and struggled when you were on the ground."

"Did I?" said poor Proudfute; "I do not remember it—but I know it is my best point—I am a strong dog in the loins. But did they all see it?"

"All as much as I," said the Smith, smothering an inclination to laughter.

"But thou wilt remind them of it?"

"Be assured I will," answered Henry, "and of thy desperate rally even now. Mark what I say to Bailie Craigdallie, and make the best of it."

"It is not that I require any evidence in my favour, for I am as brave by nature as most men in Perth—but only——" Here the man of valour paused.

"But only what?" inquired the stout armourer.

"But only I am afraid of being killed. To leave my pretty wife and my young family, you know, would be a sad change, Smith. You will know this when it is your own case, and will feel abated in courage."

"It is like that I may," said the armourer, musing.

"Then I am so accustomed to the use of arms, and so well breathed, that few men can match me. It's all here," said the little man, expanding his breast like a trussed fowl, and patting himself with his hands; "here is room for all the wind machinery."

"I dare say you are long-breathed—long-winded,—at least your speech bewrays——"

"My speech?—You are a wag—but I have got the stern post of a dromond brought up the river from Dundee."

"The stern post of a Drummond!" exclaimed the armourer, "conscience, man, it will put you in feud with the whole clan—not the least wrathful in the country, as I take it."

"St Andrew, man, you put me out!—I mean a dromond, that is, a large ship. I have fixed this post in my yard, and had it painted and carved something like a Soldan or Saracen, and with him I breathe myself, and will wield my two-handed sword against him, thrust or point, for an hour together."

"That must make you familiar with the use of your weapon," said the Smith.

"Ay, marry does it—and sometimes I will place you a bonnet (an old one, most likely) on my Soldan's head, and cleave it with such a downright blow, that, in troth, the infidel has but little of his skull remaining to hit at."

"That is unlucky, for you will lose your practice," said Henry.—"But how say you, Bonnet-maker? I will put on my head-piece and corslet one day, and you shall hew at me, allowing me my broadsword to parry and pay back? Eh, what say you?"

"By no manner of means, my dear friend. I should do you too much evil;—besides, to tell you the truth, I strike far more freely at a helmet or bonnet, when it is set on my wooden Soldan—then I am sure to fetch it down. But when there is a plume of feathers in it that nod, and two eyes gleaming fiercely from under the shadow of the visor, and when the whole is dancing about here and there, I acknowledge it puts out my hand of fence."

"So, if men would but stand stock still like your Soldan, you would play the tyrant with them, Master Proudfute?"

"In time, and with practice, I conclude I might," answered Oliver.—"But here we come up with the rest of them; Bailie Craigdallie looks angry—but it is not his kind of anger that frightens me."

You are to recollect, gentle reader, that as soon as the Bailie, and those who attended him, saw that the Smith had come up to the forlorn Bonnet-maker, and that the stranger had retreated, they gave themselves no trouble about advancing further to his assistance, which

they regarded as quite insured by the presence of the redoubted Henry Gow. They had resumed their straight road to Kinfauns, desirous that nothing should delay the execution of their mission. As some time had elapsed ere the Bonnet-maker and the Smith rejoined the party, Bailie Craigdallie asked them, and Henry Smith in particular, what they meant by dallying away precious time by riding up hill after the falconer.

"By the mass, it was not my fault, Master Bailie," replied the Smith. "If ye will couple up an ordinary low-country greyhound with a highland wolf-dog, you must not blame the first of them for taking the direction in which it pleases the last to drag him on. It was so, and not otherwise, with my neighbour Oliver Proudfute. He no sooner got up from the ground, but he mounted his mare like a flash of lightning, and enraged at the unknightly advantage which yonder rascal had taken of his stumbling horse, he flew after him like a dromedary. I could not but follow, both to prevent a second stumble, and secure our over bold friend and champion from the chance of some ambush at the top of the

hill. But the villain, who is a follower of some Lord of the Marches, and wears a winged spur for his cognizance, fled from our neighbour like fire from flint."

The senior Bailie of Perth listened with surprise to the legend which it had pleased Gow to circulate; for, though not much caring for the matter, he had always doubted the Bonnet-maker's romancing account of his own exploits, which hereafter he must hold as in some degree orthodox. The shrewd old Glover looked closer into the matter.

"You will drive the poor Bonnet-maker mad," he whispered to Henry, "and set him a-ringing his clapper, as if he were a town-bell on a rejoicing day, when for order and decency it were better he were silent."

"O, by Our Lady, father," replied the Smith, "I love the poor little braggadocio, and could not think of his sitting rueful and silent in the Provost's hall, while all the rest of them, and in especial that venomous Pottingar, were telling their mind."

"Thou art even too good-natured a fellow,

Henry," answered Simon. "But mark the difference betwixt these two men. The harmless little Bonnet-maker assumes the airs of a dragon, to disguise his natural cowardice; while the Pottingar wilfully desires to show himself timid, poor-spirited, and humble, to conceal the danger of his temper. The adder is not the less deadly that he creeps under a stone. I tell thee, son Henry, that for all his sneaking looks, and timorous talking, this wretched anatomy loves mischief more than he fears danger.—But here we stand in front of the Provost's castle; and a lordly place is Kinfauns, and a credit to the city it is, to have the owner of such a gallant castle for their chief magistrate."

"A goodly fortalice, indeed," said the Smith, looking at the broad winding Tay, as it swept under the bank on which the castle stood, like its modern successor, and seemed the queen of the valley, although, on the opposite side of the river, the strong walls of Elcho appeared to dispute the pre-eminence. Elcho, however, was in that age a peaceful nunnery, and the walls with which it was surrounded were the bar-

riers of secluded vestals, not the bulwarks of an armed garrison. " 'Tis a brave castle," said the armourer," again looking at the towers of Kinfauns, " and the breast-plate and target of the bonnie course of the Tay. It were worth lipping* a good blade before wrong were offered to it."

The porter of Kinfauns, who knew from a distance the persons and characters of the party, had already opened the court-yard gate for their entrance, and sent notice to Sir Patrick Charteris, that the eldest Bailie of Perth, with some other good citizens, were approaching the castle. The good knight, who was getting ready for a hawking party, heard the intimation, with pretty much the same feelings that the modern representative of a burgh hears of the menaced visitation of a party of his worthy electors, at a time rather unseasonable for their reception. That is, he internally devoted the intruders to Mahound and Termagant, and outwardly gave orders to receive them with all

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* *Lipping*, *i. e.* making notches in a sword, or knife.

decorum and civility; commanded the sewers to bring hot venison steaks and cold baked meats into the knightly hall with all dispatch, and the butler to broach his casks, and do his duty; for if the Fair City of Perth sometimes filled his cellar, her citizens were always equally ready to assist at emptying his flagons.

The good burghers were reverently marshalled into the hall, where the knight, who was in a riding-habit, and booted up to the middle of his thighs, received them with a mixture of courtesy and patronizing condescension; wishing them all the while at the bottom of the Tay, on account of the interruption their arrival gave to his proposed amusement of the morning. He met them in the midst of the hall, with bare head and bonnet in hand, and some such salutation as the following:—"Ha, my Master Eldest Bailie, and you, worthy Simon Glover, fathers of the Fair City;—and you, my learned Pottingar;—and you, stout Smith;—and my slashing Bonnet-maker too, who cracks more skulls than he covers, how come I to have the pleasure of seeing so many friends so early?

I was thinking to see my hawks fly, and your company will make the sport more pleasant—(*Aside*, I trust in Our Lady they may break their necks!)—that is, always, unless the city have any commands to lay on me—Butler Gilbert, dispatch, thou knave—But I hope you have no more grave errand than to try if the malvoisie holds its flavour?"

The city delegates answered to their Provost's civilities by inclinations and congees, more or less characteristic, of which the Pottingar's bow was the lowest, and the Smith's the least ceremonious. Probably he knew his own value as a fighting man upon occasion. To the general compliment the elder Bailie replied.

"Sir Patrick Charteris, and our noble Lord Provost," said Craigdallie, gravely, "had our errand been to enjoy the hospitality with which we have been often regaled here, our manners would have taught us to tarry till your lordship had invited us, as on other occasions. And as to hawking, we have had enough on't for one morning; since a wild fellow, who was fly-

ing a falcon hard by on the moor, unhorsed and cudgelled our worthy friend Oliver Bonnet-maker, or Proudfute, as some men call him, merely because he questioned him, in your honour's name, and the town of Perth's, who or what he was that took so much upon him."

"And what account gave he of himself?" said the Provost. "By St John! I will teach him to forestall my sport!"

"So please your lordship," said the Bonnet-maker, "he did take me at disadvantage. But I got on horseback again afterwards, and pricked after him gallantly. He calls himself Richard the Devil."

"How, man? he that the rhymes and romances are made on?" said the Provost. "I thought that smaik's name had been Robert."

"I trow they be different, my lord; I only graced this fellow with the full title, for indeed he called himself the Devil's Dick, and said he was a Johnstone, and a follower of the lord of that name. But I put him back into the bog, and recovered my hawking bag, which he had taken when I was at disadvantage."

Sir Patrick paused for an instant. "We have heard," said he, "of the Lord of Johnstone, and of his followers. Little is to be had by meddling with them.—Smith, tell me, did you endure this?"

"Ay, faith did I, Sir Patrick; having command from my betters not to help."

"Well, if thou satst down with it," said the Provost, "I see not why we should rise up; especially as Master Oliver Proudfute, though taken at advantage at first, has, as he has told us, recovered his reputation and that of the burgh. But here comes the wine at length. Fill round to my good friends and guests till the wine leap over the cup. Prosperity to St Johnstoun, and a merry welcome to you all, my honest friends! And now sit you to eat a morsel, for the sun is high up, and it must be long since you thrifty men have broken your fast."

"Before we eat, my Lord Provost," said the Bailie, "let us tell you the pressing cause of our coming, which as yet we have not touched upon."

"Nay, prithee, Bailie," said the Provost,

" put it off till thou hast eaten. Some complaint against the rascally jackmen and retainers of the nobles, for playing at foot-ball on the streets of the burgh, or some such goodly matter."

" No, my lord," said Craigdallie, stoutly and firmly. " It is the jackmens' masters of whom we complain, for playing at foot-ball with the honour of our families, and using as little ceremony with our daughters' sleeping chambers, as if they were in a bordel at Paris. A party of reiving night-walkers,—courtiers, and men of rank, as there is but too much reason to believe, —attempted to scale the windows of Simon Glover's house last night; they stood in their defence with drawn weapons when they were interrupted by Henry Smith, and fought till they were driven off by the rising of the citizens."

" How ?" said Sir Patrick, setting down the cup which he was about to raise to his head. " Cocksbody, make that manifest to me, and by the soul of Thomas of Longueville, I will see you righted with my best power, were it to cost me life and land.—Who attests this ?—Simon Glover, you are held an honest and a cautious

man—do you take the truth of this charge upon your conscience?"

"My lord," said Simon, "understand I am no willing complainer in this weighty matter. No damage has arisen, save to the breakers of the peace themselves. I fear only great power could have encouraged such lawless audacity; and I were unwilling to put feud between my native town and some powerful nobleman on my account. But it has been said, that if I hang back in prosecuting this complaint, it will be as much as admitting that my daughter expected such a visit, which is a direct falsehood. Therefore, my lord, I will tell your lordship what happened, so far as I know, and leave further proceeding to your wisdom." He then told, from point to point, all that he had seen of the attack.

Sir Patrick Charteris, listening with much attention, seemed particularly struck with the escape of the man who had been made prisoner. "Strange," he said, "that you did not secure him when you had him. Did you not look at him so as to know him again?"

"I had but the light of a lantern, my Lord

Provost; and as to suffering him to escape, I was alone," said the Glover, "and old. But yet I might have kept him, had I not heard my daughter shriek in the upper room; and ere I had returned from her chamber, the man had escaped through the garden."

"Now, armourer, as a true man, and a good soldier," said Sir Patrick, "tell me what you know of this matter."

Henry Gow, in his own decided style, gave a brief but clear narrative of the whole affair.

Honest Proudfute being next called upon, began his statement with an air of more importance. "Touching this awful and astounding tumult within the burgh, I cannot altogether, it is true, say with Henry Gow, that I saw the very beginning. But it will not be denied that I beheld a great part of the latter end, and especially that I procured the evidence most effectual to convict the knaves."

"And what is it, man?" said Sir Patrick Charteris. "Never lose time fumbling and prating about it. What is it?"

"I have brought your lordship, in this pouch,

what one of the rogues left behind him," said the little man. "It is a trophy which, in good faith and honest truth, I do confess I won not by the blade, but I claim the credit of securing it with that presence of mind which few men possess amidst flashing torches and clashing weapons. I secured it, my lord, and here it is."

So saying, he produced, from the hawking pouch already mentioned, the stiffened hand which had been found on the scene of the skirmish.

"Nay, Bonnet-maker," said the Provost, "I'll warrant thee man enough to secure a rogue's hand after it is cut from the body.—What do you look so busily for in your bag?"

"There should have been—there was—a ring, my lord, which was on the knave's finger. I fear I have been forgetful, and left it at home, for I took it off to show to my wife, as she cared not to look upon the dead hand, as women love not such sights. But yet I thought I had put it on the finger again. Nevertheless, it must, I bethink me, be at home. I will ride back for it, and Henry Smith will trot along with me."

"We will all trot with thee," said Sir Patrick Charteris, "since I am for Perth myself. Look you, honest burghers and good neighbours of Perth. You may have thought me unapt to be moved by light complaints and trivial breaches of your privileges, such as small trespasses on your game, the barons' followers playing foot-ball in the street, and such like. But, by the soul of Thomas of Longueville, you shall not find Patrick Charteris slothful in a matter of this importance.—This hand," he continued, holding up the severed joint, "belongs to one who hath worked no drudgery. We will put it in a way to be known and claimed of the owner, if his comrades of the revel have but one spark of honour in them.—Hark you, Gerard—get me some half-score of good men instantly to horse, and let them take jack and spear. Meanwhile, neighbours, if feud arise out of this, as is most likely, we must come to each other's support. If my poor house be attacked, how many men will you bring to my support?"

The burghers looked at Henry Gow, to whom

they instinctively turned when such matters were discussed. "I will answer," said he, "for fifty good fellows to be assembled ere the common bell has rung ten minutes; for a thousand, in the space of an hour."

"It is well," answered the gallant Provost; "and in the case of need, I will come to aid the Fair City with such men as I can make. And now, good friends, let us to horse."

CHAPTER VIII.

It was early in the afternoon of St Valentine's Day that the Prior of the Dominicans was engaged in discharge of his duties as Confessor to a penitent of no small importance. This was an elderly man, of a goodly presence, a florid and healthful cheek, the under part of which was shaded by a venerable white beard, which descended over his bosom. The large and clear blue eyes, with the broad expanse of brow, expressed dignity; but it was of a character which seemed more accustomed to receive honours voluntarily paid, than to enforce them when they were refused. The good-nature of the expression was so great as to approach to defenceless simplicity or weakness of character, unfit, it might be inferred, to repel intrusion, or subdue resist-

ance. Amongst the grey locks of this personage was placed a small circlet or coronet of gold, upon a blue fillet. His beads, which were large and conspicuous, were of native gold, rudely enough wrought, but ornamented with Scottish pearls, of rare size and beauty. These were his only ornaments; and a long crimson robe of silk, tied by a sash of the same colour, formed his attire. His shrift being finished, he arose heavily from the embroidered cushion upon which he kneeled during his confession, and by the assistance of a crutch-headed staff of ebony, moved, lame and ungracefully, and with apparent pain, to a chair of state, which, surmounted by a canopy, was placed for his accommodation by the chimney of the lofty and large apartment.

This was Robert, third of the name, and the second of the ill-fated family of Stewart, who filled the throne of Scotland. He had many virtues, and was not without talent; but it was his great misfortune, that, like others of his devoted line, his merits were not of a kind suited to the part which he was called upon to perform in life.

The King of so fierce a people as the Scots then were, ought to have been warlike, prompt, and active, liberal in rewarding services, strict in punishing crimes; one whose conduct should make him feared as well as beloved. The qualities of Robert the Third were the reverse of all these. In youth he had indeed seen battles; but, without incurring disgrace, he had never manifested the chivalrous love of war and peril, or the eager desire to distinguish himself by dangerous achievements, which in that age was expected from all who were of noble birth, and had claims to authority.

Besides, his military career was very short. Amidst the tumult of a tournament, the young Earl of Carrick, such was then his title, received a kick from the horse of Sir James Douglas of Dalkeith; in consequence of which, he was lame for the rest of his life, and absolutely disabled from taking share either in warfare, or in the military sports and tournaments which were its image. As Robert had never testified much predilection for violent exertion, he did not probably much regret the incapacities which ex-

empted him from these active scenes. But his misfortune, or rather its consequences, lowered him in the eyes of a fierce nobility and warlike people. He was obliged to repose the principal charge of his affairs now in one member, now in another, of his family; sometimes with the actual rank, and always with the power of Lieutenant-general of the kingdom. His paternal affection would have induced him to use the assistance of his eldest son, a young man of spirit and talent, whom in fondness he had created Duke of Rothsay, in order to give him the present possession of a dignity next to that of the throne. But the young Prince's head was too giddy, and his hand too feeble, to wield with dignity the delegated sceptre. However fond of power, pleasure was the Prince's favourite pursuit; and the court was disturbed, and the country scandalized, by the number of fugitive amours, and extravagant revels, practised by him who should have set an example of order and regularity to the youth of the kingdom.

The license and impropriety of the Duke of Rothsay's conduct was the more reprehensible

in the public view, that he was a married person; although some, over whom his youth, gaiety, grace, and good temper, had obtained influence, were of opinion, that an excuse for his libertinism might be found in the circumstances of the marriage itself. They reminded each other that his nuptials were entirely conducted by his uncle, the Duke of Albany, by whose counsels the infirm and timid King was much governed at the time, and who had the character of managing the temper of his brother and sovereign, so as might be most injurious to the interests and prospects of the young heir. By Albany's machinations, the hand of the heir apparent was in a manner put up to sale, as it was understood publicly that the nobleman in Scotland who should give the largest dower to his daughter, might aspire to raise her to the bed of the Duke of Rothsay.

In the contest for preference which ensued, George, Earl of Dunbar and March, who possessed, by himself or his vassals, a great part of the eastern frontier, was preferred to other competitors; and his daughter was, with the mutual

good will of the young couple, actually contracted to the Duke of Rothsay.

But there remained a third party to be consulted, and that was no other than the tremendous Archibald, Earl of Douglas, terrible alike from the extent of his lands, from the offices and jurisdictions with which he was invested, and from his personal qualities of wisdom and valour, mingled with indomitable pride, and more than the feudal love of vengeance. The Earl was also nearly related to the throne, having married the eldest daughter of the reigning Monarch.

After the espousals of the Duke of Rothsay with the Earl of March's daughter, Douglas, as if he had postponed his share in the negotiation to show that it could not be concluded with any one but himself, entered the lists to break off the contract. He made a larger offer with his daughter Marjory than the Earl of March had proffered; and secured by his own cupidity and fear of the Douglas, Albany exerted his influence with the timid monarch till he was prevailed upon to break the contract with the Earl of

March, and wed his son to Marjory Douglas, a woman whom he could not love. No apology was offered to the Earl of March, excepting that the espousals betwixt the Prince and Elizabeth of Dunbar had not been approved by the States of Parliament, and that till such ratification, the contract was liable to be broken off. The Earl deeply resented the wrong done to himself and his daughter, and was generally understood to study revenge, which his great influence on the English frontier was likely to place within his power.

In the meantime, the Duke of Rothsay, incensed at the sacrifice of his hand and his inclinations to this state-intrigue, took his own mode of venting his displeasure, by neglecting his wife, contemning his formidable and dangerous father-in-law, and showing little respect to the authority of the King himself, and none whatever to the remonstrances of Albany his uncle, whom he looked upon as his confirmed enemy.

Amid these internal dissensions of his family, which extended themselves through his councils and administration, introducing everywhere

the baneful effects of uncertainty and disunion, the feeble Monarch had for some time been supported by the counsels of his Queen Annabella, a daughter of the noble house of Drummond, gifted with a depth of sagacity and firmness of mind, which exercised some restraint over the levities of a son who respected her, and sustained on many occasions the wavering resolution of her royal husband. But after her death the imbecile Sovereign resembled nothing so much as a vessel drifted from her anchors, and tossed about amidst contending currents. Abstractedly considered, Robert might be said to doat upon his son,—to entertain respect and awe for the character of his brother Albany, so much more decisive than his own,—to fear the Douglas with a terror which was almost instinctive, and to suspect the constancy of the bold but fickle Earl of March. But his feelings towards these various characters were so mixed and complicated, that from time to time they showed entirely different from what they really were; and according to the interest which had been last exerted over his flexible mind,

the King would change from an indulgent, to a strict and even cruel father—from a confiding, to a jealous brother—or from a benignant and bountiful, to a grasping and encroaching Sovereign. Like the cameleon, his feeble mind reflected the colour of that firmer character upon which at the time he reposed for counsel and assistance. And when he disused the advice of one of his family, and employed the counsel of another, it was no unwonted thing to see a total change of measures, equally disrespectable to the character of the King, and dangerous to the safety of the state.

It followed as a matter of course, that the clergy of the Catholic Church acquired influence over a man whose intentions were so excellent, but whose resolutions were so infirm. Robert was haunted, not only with a due sense of the errors he had really committed, but with the tormenting apprehensions of those peccadilloes which beset a superstitious and timid mind. It is scarcely necessary, therefore, to add, that the churchmen of various descriptions had no small influence over this easy-tempered prince, though

indeed, theirs was, at that period, an influence from which few or none escaped, however resolute and firm of purpose in affairs of a temporal character.—We now return from this long digression, without which what we have to relate could not perhaps have been well understood.

The King had moved with ungraceful difficulty to the cushioned chair, which, under a state or canopy, stood prepared for his accommodation, and upon which he sank down with enjoyment, like an indolent man, who had been for some time confined to a constrained position. When seated, the gentle and venerable looks of the good old man showed benevolence. The Prior, who now remained standing opposite to the royal seat, with an air of deep deference which cloaked the natural haughtiness of his carriage, was a man betwixt forty and fifty years of age, but every one of whose hairs still retained their natural dark colour. Acute features, and a penetrating look, attested the talents by which the venerable father had ac-

quired his high station in the community over which he presided; and, we may add, in the councils of the kingdom in whose service they were often exercised. The chief objects which his education and habits taught him to keep in view, were the extension of the dominion and the wealth of the church, and the suppression of heresy, both of which he endeavoured to accomplish by all the means which his situation afforded him. But he honoured his religion by the sincerity of his own belief, and by the morality which guided his conduct in all ordinary situations. The faults of the Prior Anselm, though they led him into grievous error, and even cruelty, were perhaps rather those of his age and profession—his virtues were his own.

"These things done," said the King, "and the lands I have mentioned, secured by my gift to this monastery, you are of opinion, father, that I stand as much in the good graces of our Holy Mother Church, as to term myself her dutiful son?"

"Surely, my liege," said the Prior; "would to God that all her children brought to the ef-

ficacious sacrament of confession as deep a sense of their errors, and as much will to make amends for them. But I speak these comforting words, my liege, not to Robert King of Scotland, but only to my humble and devout penitent, Robert Stewart of Carrick."

"You surprise me, Father," answered the King; "I have little check on my conscience for aught that I have done in my kingly office, seeing that I use therein less mine own opinion than the advice of the most wise counsellors."

"Even therein lieth the danger, my liege," replied the Prior. "The Holy Father recognises in your Grace, in every thought, word, and action, an obedient vassal of the Holy Church. But there are perverse counsellors, who obey the instinct of their wicked hearts, while they abuse the good-nature and ductility of their monarch, and, under colour of serving his temporal interests, take steps which are prejudicial to those that last to eternity."

King Robert raised himself upright in his

chair, and assumed an air of authority, which, though it well became him, he did not usually display.

"Prior Anselm," he said, "if you have discovered anything in my conduct, whether as a king or a private individual, which may call down such censures as your words intimate, it is your duty to speak plainly, and I command you to do so."

"My liege, you shall be obeyed," answered the Prior, with an inclination of the body. Then raising himself up, and assuming the dignity of his rank in the church, he said, "Hear from me the words of our Holy Father the Pope, the successor of St Peter, to whom have descended the keys, both to bind and to unloose. 'Wherefore, O Robert of Scotland, hast thou not received into the See of St Andrews, Robert of Wardlaw, whom the Pontiff hath recommended to fill that See? Why dost thou make profession with thy lips, of dutiful service to the Church, when thy actions proclaim the depravity and disobedience of thy

inward soul? Obedience is better than sacrifice.' "

"Sir Prior," said the Monarch, bearing himself in a manner not unbecoming his lofty rank, "we may well dispense with answering you upon this subject, being a matter which concerns us and the Estates of our kingdom, but does not affect our private conscience."

"Alas," said the Prior, "and whose conscience will it concern at the last day? Which of your belted lords or wealthy burgesses will then step between their King and the penalty which he has incurred, by following of their secular policy in matters ecclesiastical? Know, mighty King, that, were all the chivalry of thy realm drawn up to shield thee from the red levin-bolt, they would be consumed like scorched parchment before the blaze of a furnace."

"Good Father Prior," said the King, on whose timorous conscience this kind of language seldom failed to make an impression, "you surely argue over rigidly in this matter. It was during my last indisposition, while the

Earl of Douglas held, as Lieutenant-general, the regal authority in Scotland, that the obstruction to the reception of the Primate unhappily arose. Do not, therefore, tax me with what happened when I was unable to conduct the affairs of the kingdom, and compelled to delegate my power to another."

"To your subject, Sire, you have said enough," replied the Prior. "But, if the impediment arose during the lieutenancy of the Earl of Douglas, the Legate of his Holiness will demand wherefore it has not been instantly removed, when the King resumed in his royal hands the reins of authority? The Black Douglas can do much; more perhaps than a subject should have power to do in the kingdom of his sovereign; but he cannot stand betwixt your grace and your own conscience, or release you from the duties to the Holy Church, which your situation as a king imposes upon you."

"Father," said Robert, somewhat impatiently, "you are over peremptory in this matter, and ought at least to wait a reasonable season,

until we have time to consider of some remedy. Such disputes have happened repeatedly in the reigns of our predecessors; and our royal and blessed ancestor, Saint David, did not resign his privileges as a monarch without making a stand in their defence, even though he was involved in arguments with the Holy Father himself."

"And therein was that great and good king neither holy nor saintly," said the Prior; "and therefore was he given to be a rout and a spoil to his enemies, when he raised his sword against the banners of St Peter, and St Paul, and St John of Beverley, in the war, as it is still called, of the Standard. Well was it for him, that, like his namesake, the son of Jesse, his sin was punished upon earth, and not entered against him at the long and dire day of accounting."

"Well, good Prior—well—enough of this for the present. The Holy See shall, God willing, have no reason to complain of me. I take Our Lady to witness, I would not for the

crown I wear take the burden of wronging our Mother Church. We have ever feared that the Earl of Douglas kept his eyes too much fixed on the fame and the temporalities of this frail and passing life, to feel altogether as he ought the claims that refer to a future world."

"It is but lately," said the Prior, "that he hath taken up forcible quarters in the Monastery of Aberbrothock, with his retinue of a thousand followers; and the abbot is compelled to furnish him with all he needs for horse and man, which the Earl calls exercising the hospitality which he hath a right to expect from the foundation to which his ancestors were contributors. Certain, it were better to return to the Douglas his lands than to submit to such exaction, which more resembles the masterful license of Highland thiggers and sorners, than the demeanour of a Christian baron."

"The Black Douglasses," said the King, with a sigh, "are a race which will not be said nay. But, Father Prior, I am myself, it may

be, an intruder of this kind ; for my sojourning hath been long among you, and my retinue, though far fewer than the Douglas's, are nevertheless enough to cumber you for their daily maintenance; and though our order is to send out purveyors to lessen your charge as much as may be, yet if there be inconvenience, it were fitting we should remove in time."

" Now, Our Lady forbid," said the Prior, who, if desirous of power, had nothing meanly covetous in his temper, but was even magnificent in his generous kindness; " certainly the Dominican Convent can afford to her Sovereign the hospitality which the house offers to every wanderer of whatever condition, who will receive it at the hands of the poor servants of our patron. No, my royal liege; come with ten times your present train, they shall neither want a grain of oats, a pile of straw, a morsel of bread, nor an ounce of food, which our convent will not supply them. It is one thing to employ the revenues of the Church, which are so much larger than monks ought to need or

wish for, in the suitable and dutiful reception of your royal Majesty, and another to have it wrenched from us by the hands of rude and violent men, whose love of rapine is only limited by the extent of their power."

"It is well, good Prior," said the King; "and now to turn our thoughts for an instant from state affairs, can thy reverence inform us how the good citizens of Perth have begun their Valentine's Day?—Gallantly and merrily, and peacefully, I hope."

"For gallantly, my liege, I know little of such qualities. For peacefully, there were three or four men, two cruelly wounded, came this morning before day-light to ask the privilege of girth and sanctuary, pursued by a hue and cry of citizens in their shirts, with clubs, bills, Lochaber axes, and two-handed swords, crying kill and slay, each louder than another. Nay, they were not satisfied when our porter and watch told them that those they pursued had taken refuge in the Galilee of the Church; but continued for some minutes clamouring and striking

upon the postern door, demanding that the men who had offended should be delivered up to them.—I was afraid their rude noise might have broken your Majesty's rest, and raised some surprise."

"My rest might have been broken," said the Monarch; "but that sounds of violence should have occasioned surprise—Alas, reverend Father, there is in Scotland only one place where the shriek of the victim, and threats of the oppressor are not heard—and that, Father, is—the grave."

The Prior stood in respectful silence, sympathizing with the feelings of a monarch, whose tenderness of heart suited so ill with the condition and manners of his people.

"And what became of the fugitives?" asked Robert, after a minute's pause.

"Surely, Sire," said the Prior, "they were dismissed, as they desired to be, before daylight; and after we had sent out to be assured that no ambush of their enemies watched them in the vicinity, they went their way in peace."

"You know nothing," inquired the King, "who the men were, or the cause of their taking refuge with you?"

"The cause," said the Prior, "was the riot with the townsmen; but how arising is not known to us. The custom of our house is to afford twenty-four hours of uninterrupted refuge in the sanctuary of St Dominic, without asking any question at the poor unfortunates who have sought relief there. If they desire to remain for a longer space, the cause of their resorting to sanctuary must be put upon the register of the convent; and, praised be our holy Saint, many persons escape the weight of the law by this temporary protection, whom, did we know the character of their crimes, we might have found ourselves obliged to render up to their pursuers and persecutors."

As the Prior spoke, a dim idea occurred to the Monarch, that the privilege of sanctuary thus peremptorily executed, must prove a severe interruption to the course of justice through his realm. But he repelled the feeling, as if it

had been a suggestion of Satan, and took care that not a single word should escape to betray to the churchman that such a profane thought had ever occupied his bosom; on the contrary, he hasted to change the subject.

"The sun," he said, "moves slowly on the index. After the painful information you have given me, I expected the Lords of my Council ere now, to take order with the ravelled affairs of this unhappy riot. Evil was the fortune which gave me rule over a people, among whom it seems to me I am in my own person the only man who desires rest and tranquillity."

"The Church always desires peace and tranquillity," added the Prior, not suffering even so general a proposition to escape the poor King's oppressed mind, without insisting on a saving clause for the Church's honour.

"We meant nothing else," said Robert. "But, Father Prior, you will allow that the Church, in quelling strife, as is doubtless her purpose, resembles the busy housewife, who puts in motion the dust which she means to sweep away."

To this remark the Prior would have made some reply, but the door of the apartment was opened, and a gentleman usher announced the Duke of Albany.

CHAPTER IX.

> If I know how to manage these affairs,
> Thus thrust disorderly upon my hands,
> Never believe me———
>
> *Richard II.*

The Duke of Albany was, like his royal brother, named Robert. The Christian name of the latter had been John, until he was called to the throne; when the superstition of the times observed that the name had been connected with misfortune in the lives and reigns of John of England, John of France, and John Baliol of Scotland. It was therefore agreed, that, to elude the bad omen, the new King should assume the name of Robert, rendered dear to Scotland by the recollections of Robert Bruce. We mention this, to account for the existence

of two brothers of the same Christian name in one family, which was not certainly an usual occurrence, more than at the present day.

Albany, also an aged man, was not supposed to be much more disposed for warlike enterprise than the King himself. But if he had not courage, he had wisdom to conceal and cloak over his want of that quality, which, once suspected, would have ruined all the plans which his ambition had formed. He had also pride enough to supply, in extremity, the want of real valour, and command enough over his nerves to conceal their agitation. In other respects, he was experienced in the ways of courts, calm, cool, and crafty, fixing upon the points which he desired to attain, while they were yet far removed, and never losing sight of them, though the winding paths in which he trode might occasionally seem to point to a different direction. In his person he resembled the King, for he was noble and majestic both in stature and countenance. But he had the advantage of his elder brother, in being unencumbered with any infirmity, and in every respect lighter

and more active. His dress was rich and grave, as became his age and rank, and, like his royal brother, he wore no arms of any kind, a case of small knives supplying at his girdle the place usually occupied by a dagger, in absence of a sword.

At the Duke's entrance the Prior, after making an obeisance, respectfully withdrew to a recess in the apartment, at some distance from the royal seat, in order to leave the conversation of the brothers uncontrolled by the presence of a third person. It is necessary to mention, that the recess was formed by a window, placed in the inner front of the monastic buildings, called the Palace, from its being the frequent residence of the Kings of Scotland, but which was, unless on such occasions, the residence of the Prior or Abbot. The window was placed over the principal entrance to the royal apartments, and commanded a view of the internal quadrangle of the convent, formed on the right hand by the length of the magnificent church, on the left by a building, containing the range of cellars, with the refectory, chapter-house, and

other conventual apartments rising above them, for such existed altogether independent of the space occupied by King Robert and his attendants; while a fourth row of buildings, showing a noble outward front to the rising sun, consisted of a large *hospitium*, for the reception of strangers and pilgrims, and many subordinate offices, warehouses, and places of accommodation, for the ample stores which supplied the magnificent hospitality of the Dominican fathers. A lofty vaulted entrance led through this eastern front into the quadrangle, and was precisely opposite to the window at which Prior Anselm stood, so that he could see underneath the dark arch, and observe the light which gleamed beneath it from the eastern and open portal; but, owing to the height to which he was raised, and the depth of the vaulted archway, his eye could but indistinctly reach the opposite and external portal. It is necessary to notice these localities. We return to the conversation between the princely relatives.

"My dear brother," said the King, raising the Duke of Albany, as he stooped to kiss his

hand; "my dear, dear brother, wherefore this ceremonial? Are we not both sons of the same Stewart of Scotland, and of the same Elizabeth More?"

"I have not forgot that it is so," said Albany, arising; "but I must not omit, in the familiarity of the brother, the respect that is due to the King."

"Oh, true, most true, Robin," answered the King. "The throne is like a lofty and barren rock, upon which flower or shrub can never take root. All kindly feelings, all tender affections, are denied to a monarch. A king must not fold a brother to his heart—he dare not give way to fondness for a son!"

"Such, in some respects, is the doom of greatness, Sire," answered Albany; "but Heaven, who removed to some distance from your Majesty's sphere the members of your own family, has given you a whole people to be your children."

"Alas! Robert," answered the Monarch, "your heart is better framed for the duties of a sovereign than mine. I see from the height at

which fate has placed me, that multitude whom you call my children—I love them, I wish them well—but they are many, and they are distant from me. Alas! even the meanest of them has some beloved being whom he can clasp to his heart, and upon whom he can lavish the fondness of a father! But all that a king can give to a people is a smile, such as the sun bestows on the snowy peaks of the Grampian mountains, as distant and as ineffectual. Alas, Robin! our father used to caress us, and if he chid us it was with a tone of kindness; yet he was a monarch as well as I, and wherefore should not I be permitted, like him, to reclaim my poor prodigal by affection as well as severity?"

"Had affection never been tried, my liege," replied Albany, in the tone of one who delivers sentiments which he grieves to utter, "means of gentleness ought assuredly to be first made use of. Your Grace is best judge whether they have been long enough persevered in, and whether those of discouragement and restraint may not prove a more effectual corrective. It is exclusively in your royal power to take what

measures with the Duke of Rothsay you think will be most available to his ultimate benefit, and that of the kingdom."

"This is unkind, brother," said the King; "you indicate the painful path which you would have me pursue, yet you offer me not your support in treading it."

"My support your Grace may ever command," replied Albany; "but would it become me, of all men on earth, to prompt to your Grace severe measures against your son and heir? Me—on whom, in case of failure—which Heaven forefend—of your Grace's family, this fatal crown might descend? Would it not be thought and said by the fiery March and the haughty Douglas, that Albany had sown dissension between his royal brother and the heir to the Scottish throne, perhaps to clear the way for the succession of his own family?—No, my liege—I can sacrifice my life to your service, but I must not place my honour in danger."

"You say true, Robin—you say very true," replied the King, hastening to put his own interpretation upon his brother's words. "We

must not suffer these powerful and dangerous lords to perceive that there is aught like discord in the royal family. That must be avoided of all things; and therefore we will still try indulgent measures, in hopes of correcting the follies of Rothsay. I behold sparks of hope in him, Robin, from time to time, that are well worth cherishing. He is young—very young—a prince, and in the hey-day of his blood. We will have patience with him, like a good rider with a hot-tempered horse. Let him exhaust this idle humour, and no one will be better pleased with him than yourself. You have censured me in your kindness for being too gentle, too retired —Rothsay has no such defects."

"I will pawn my life he has not," replied Albany, drily.

"And he wants not reflection as well as spirit," continued the poor King, pleading the cause of his son to his brother. "I have sent for him to attend council to-day, and we shall see how he acquits himself of his devoir. You yourself allow, Robin, that the Prince wants

neither shrewdness nor capacity for affairs, when he is in the humour to consider them."

"Doubtless, he wants neither, my liege," replied Albany, "when he *is* in the humour to consider them."

"I say so," answered the King; "and am heartily glad that you agree with me, Robin, in giving this poor hapless young man another trial. He has no mother now to plead his cause with an incensed father. That must be remembered, Albany."

"I trust," said Albany, "the course which is most agreeable to your Grace's feelings will also prove the wisest and the best."

The Duke well saw the simple stratagem by which the King was endeavouring to escape from the conclusions of his reasoning, and to adopt, under pretence of his sanction, a course of proceeding the reverse of what it best suited him to recommend. But though he saw he could not guide his brother to the line of conduct he desired, he would not abandon the reins, but resolved to watch for a fitter opportunity of obtaining the sinister advantages to which new

quarrels betwixt the King and Prince were soon, he thought, likely to give rise.

In the meantime, King Robert, afraid lest his brother should resume the painful subject from which he had just escaped, called aloud to the Prior of the Dominicans, "I hear the trampling of horse. Your station commands the court-yard, reverend Father. Look from the window, and tell us who alights—Rothsay, is it not?"

"The noble Earl of March, with his followers," said the Prior.

"Is he strongly accompanied?" said the King. "Do his people enter the inner-gate?"

At the same moment, Albany whispered the King, "Fear nothing—the Brandanes* of your household are under arms."

The King nodded thanks, while the Prior from the window answered the question he had put. "The Earl is attended by two pages, two gentlemen, and four grooms. One page follows him up the main stair-case, bearing his lord-

* The men of the Isle of Bute were called Brandanes; from what derivation is uncertain. The island was the King's own patrimony, and its natives his personal followers.

ship's sword. The others halt in the court, and —Benedicite, how is this?—Here is a strolling glee-woman, with her viol, preparing to sing beneath the royal windows, and in the cloister of the Dominicans, as she might in the yard of an hostelrie! I will have her presently thrust forth."

"Not so, Father," said the King. "Let me implore grace for the poor wanderer. The joyous science, as they call it, which they profess, mingles sadly with the distresses to which wants and calamity condemn a strolling race; and in that they resemble a King, to whom all men cry, 'All hail!' while he lacks the homage and obedient affection which the poorest yeoman receives from his family. Let the wanderer remain undisturbed, Father; and let her sing if she will to the yeomen and troopers in the court —it will keep them from quarrelling with each other, belonging, as they do, to such unruly and hostile masters."

So spoke the well-meaning and feeble-minded Prince, and the Prior bowed in acquiescence. As he spoke, the Earl of March entered the hall

of audience, dressed in the ordinary riding garb of the time, and wearing his poniard. He had left in the antiroom the page of honour who carried his sword. The Earl was a well-built, handsome man, fair-complexioned, with a considerable profusion of light-coloured hair, and bright blue eyes, which gleamed like those of a falcon. He exhibited in his countenance, otherwise pleasing, the marks of a hasty and irritable temper, which his situation as a high and powerful feudal lord had given him but too many opportunities of indulging.

"I am glad to see you, my Lord of March," said the King, with a gracious inclination of his person. "You have been long absent from our councils."

"My liege," answered March, with a deep reverence to the King, and a haughty and formal inclination to the Duke of Albany, "if I have been absent from your Grace's councils, it is because my place has been supplied by more acceptable, and, I doubt not, abler counsellors. And now I come but to say to your Highness, that the news from the English frontier make it necessary that I should return without delay

to my own estates. Your Grace has your wise and politic brother, my Lord of Albany, with whom to consult, and the mighty and warlike Earl of Douglas to carry your councils into effect. I am of no use save in my own country; and thither, with your Highness's permission, I am purposed instantly to return, to attend my charge, as Warden of the Eastern Marches."

"You will not deal so unkindly with us, cousin," replied the gentle Monarch. "Here are evil tidings on the wind. These unhappy Highland clans are again breaking into general commotion, and the tranquillity even of our own court requires the best of our council to advise, and the bravest of our barons to execute what may be resolved upon. The descendant of Thomas Randolph will not surely abandon the grandson of Robert Bruce at such a period as this?"

"I leave with him the descendant of the far-famed James of Douglas," answered March. "It is his lordship's boast, that he never puts foot in stirrup but a thousand horse mount with him as his daily lifeguard, and I believe the monks of Aberbrothock will swear to the fact.

Surely, with all the Douglas's chivalry, they are fitter to restrain a disorderly swarm of Highland kerne, than I can be to withstand the archery of England, and power of Henry Hotspur? And then, here is his Grace of Albany, so jealous in his care of your Highness's person, that he calls your Brandanes to take arms, when a dutiful subject like myself approaches the court with a poor half-score of horse, the retinue of the meanest of the petty barons who own a tower and a thousand acres of barren heath. When such precautions are taken where there is not the slightest chance of peril—since I trust none was to be apprehended from me—your royal person will surely be suitably guarded in real danger."

"My Lord of March," said the Duke of Albany, "the meanest of the barons of whom you speak put their followers in arms, even when they receive their dearest and nearest friends within the iron gate of their castle; and, if it please Our Lady, I will not care less for the King's person than they do for their own. The Brandanes are the King's immediate retainers and household servants, and an hundred of them

is but a small guard round his Grace, when yourself, my lord, as well as the Earl of Douglas, often ride with ten times the number."

"My lord duke," replied March, "when the service of the King requires it, I can ride with ten times as many horse as your grace has named; but I have never done so either traitorously to entrap the King, nor boastfully to overawe other nobles."

"Brother Robert," said the King, ever anxious to be a peace-maker, "you do wrong even to intimate a suspicion of my Lord of March. And you, cousin of March, misconstrue my brother's caution.—But hark—to divert this angry parley—I hear no unpleasing touch of minstrelsy. You know the gay science, my Lord of March, and love it well—Step to yonder window, beside the holy Prior, at whom we make no question touching secular pleasures, and you will tell us if the music and lay be worth listening to. The notes are of France, I think—My brother of Albany's judgment is not worth a cockle-shell in such matters—so you, cousin, must report your opinion

whether the poor glee-maiden deserves recompense. Our son and the Douglas will presently be here, and then, when our council is assembled, we will treat of graver matters."

With something like a smile on his proud brow, March withdrew into the recess of the window, and stood there in silence beside the Prior, like one who, while he obeyed the King's command, saw through and despised the timid precaution which it implied, as an attempt to prevent the dispute betwixt Albany and himself. The tune, which was played upon a viol, was gay and sprightly in the commencement, with a touch of the wildness of the Troubadour music. But as it proceeded, the faltering tones of the instrument, and of the female voice which accompanied it, became plaintive and interrupted, as if choked by the painful feelings of the minstrel.

The offended Earl, whatever might be his judgment in such matters on which the King had complimented him, paid, it may be supposed, little attention to the music of the female minstrel. His proud heart was struggling be-

tween the allegiance he owed his Sovereign, as well as the love he still found lurking in his bosom for the person of his well-natured King, and a desire of vengeance arising out of his disappointed ambition, and the disgrace done to him by the substitution of Marjory Douglas to be bride of the heir-apparent, instead of his betrothed daughter. March had the vices and virtues of a hasty and uncertain character, and even now, when he came to bid the King adieu, with the purpose of renouncing his allegiance as soon as he reached his own feudal territories, he felt unwilling, and almost unable, to resolve upon a step so criminal and so full of peril. It was with such dangerous cogitations that he was occupied during the beginning of the gleemaiden's lay; but objects which called his attention powerfully, as the songstress proceeded, affected the current of his thoughts, and riveted them on what was passing in the court-yard of the monastery. The song was in the Provençal dialect, well understood as the language of poetry in all the courts of Europe, and particularly in Scotland. It was more simply turn-

ed, however, than was the general caste of the Sirventes, and rather resembled the *lai* of a Norman Minstrel. It may be translated thus:

The Lay of poor Louise.

Ah, poor Louise! The live-long day
She roams from cot to castle gay;
And still her voice and viol say,
Ah, maids, beware the woodland way,
Think on Louise!

Ah, poor Louise! The sun was high,
It smirch'd her cheek, it dimm'd her eye,
The woodland walk was cool and nigh,
Where birds with chiming streamlets vie
To cheer Louise.

Ah, poor Louise! The savage bear
Made ne'er that lovely grove his lair;
The wolves molest not paths so fair—
But better far had such been there
For poor Louise.

Ah, poor Louise! In woody wold
She met a huntsman fair and bold;
His baldrick was of silk and gold,
And many a witching tale he told
To poor Louise.

Ah, poor Louise! Small cause to pine
Hadst thou for treasures of the mine;
For peace of mind, that gift divine,
And spotless innocence, were thine,
Ah, poor Louise!

Ah, poor Louise! Thy treasure's reft!
I know not if by force or theft,
Or part by violence, part by gift;
But misery is all that's left
To poor Louise.

Let poor Louise some succour have!
She will not long your bounty crave,
Or tire the gay with warning stave—
For Heaven has grace, and earth a grave
For poor Louise.

The song was no sooner finished, than, anxious lest the dispute should be revived betwixt his brother and the Earl of March, King Robert called to the latter, "What think you of the minstrelsy, my lord?—Methinks, as I heard it even at this distance, it was a wild and pleasing lay."

"My judgment is not deep, my lord; but the singer may dispense with my approbation, since she seems to have received that of his Grace of Rothsay—the first judge in Scotland."

"How!" said the King in alarm; "is my son below?"

"He is sitting on horseback by the glee-maiden," said March, with a malicious smile

on his cheek, " apparently as much interested by her conversation as her music."

" How is this, Father Prior?" said the King. But the Prior drew back from the lattice.

" I have no will to see, my lord, things which it would pain me to repeat."

" How is all this?" said the King, who coloured deeply, and seemed about to rise from his chair; but changed his mind, as if unwilling, perhaps, to look upon some unbecoming prank of the wild young Prince, which he might not have had heart to punish with necessary severity. The Earl of March seemed to have a pleasure in informing him of that, of which doubtless he desired to remain ignorant.

" My liege," he cried, " this is better and better. The glee-maiden has not only engaged the ear of the Prince of Scotland, as well as of every groom and trooper in the court-yard, but she has riveted the attention of the Black Douglas, whom we have not known as a passionate admirer of the Gay Science. But truly, I do not wonder at his astonishment, for the Prince

has honoured the fair professor of song and viol with a kiss of approbation."

"How?" cried the King, "is Rothsay trifling with a glee-maiden, and his wife's father in presence?—Go, my good Father Abbot, call the Prince here instantly—Go, my dearest brother——"—And when they had both left the room, the King continued, "Go, good cousin of March—there will be mischief, I am assured of it. I pray you go, cousin, and second my Lord Prior's prayers with my commands."

"You forget, my liege," said March, with the voice of a deeply offended person; "the father of Elizabeth of Dunbar were but an unfit intercessor between the Douglas and his royal son-in-law."

"I crave your pardon, cousin," said the gentle old man. "I own you have had some wrong —but my Rothsay will be murdered—I must go myself."

But as he arose precipitately from his chair, the poor King missed a footstep, stumbled, and fell heavily to the ground, in such a manner, that his head striking the corner of the seat

from which he had risen, he became for a minute insensible. The sight of the accident at once overcame March's resentment, and melted his heart. He ran to the fallen Monarch, and replaced him in his seat, using, in the tenderest and most respectful manner, such means as seemed most fit to recall animation. Robert opened his eyes, and gazed around with uncertainty.

"What has happened?—are we alone?—who is with us?"

"Your dutiful subject, March," replied the Earl.

"Alone with the Earl of March!" repeated the King, his still disturbed intellects receiving some alarm from the name of a powerful chief, whom he had reason to believe he had mortally offended.

"Yes, my gracious liege, with poor George of Dunbar; of whom many have wished your Majesty to think ill, though he will be found truer to your royal person at the last than they will."

"Indeed, cousin, you have had too much

wrong; and believe me, we shall strive to redress—"

"If your Grace thinks so, it may yet be righted," interrupted the Earl; "the Prince and Marjory Douglas are nearly related—the dispensation from Rome was informally granted—their marriage cannot be lawful—the Pope, who will do much for so godly a Prince, can set aside this unchristian union, in respect of the pre-contract. Bethink you well, my liege," continued the Earl, kindling with a new train of ambitious thoughts, to which the unexpected opportunity of pleading his cause personally had given rise,—"bethink you how you choose betwixt the Douglas and me. He is powerful and mighty, I grant. But George of Dunbar wears the keys of Scotland at his belt, and could bring an English army to the gates of Edinburgh, ere Douglas could leave the skirts of Cairntable to oppose them. Your royal son loves my poor deserted girl, and hates the haughty Marjory of Douglas. Your Grace may judge the small account in which he holds her, by his toying with a common glee-maiden even in the presence of her father."

The King had hitherto listened to the Earl's argument with the bewildered feelings of a timid horseman, borne away by an impetuous steed, whose course he can neither arrest nor direct. But the last words awakened in his recollection the sense of his son's immediate danger.

"Oh, ay, most true—my son—the Douglas—Oh, my dear cousin, prevent blood, and all shall be as you will.—Hark, there is a tumult—that was the clash of arms!"

"By my coronet—by my knightly faith, it is true!" said the Earl, looking from the window upon the inner square of the convent, now filled with armed men and brandished weapons, and resounding with the clash of armour. The deep-vaulted entrance was crowded with warriors at its farthest extremity, and blows seemed to be in the act of being exchanged betwixt some who were endeavouring to shut the gate, and others who contended to press in.

"I will go instantly," said the Earl of March, "and soon quell this sudden broil—Humbly,

I pray your Majesty to think on what I have had the boldness to propose."

"I will—I will, fair cousin," said the King, scarce knowing to what he pledged himself—"Do but prevent tumult and bloodshed!"

CHAPTER X.

We must here trace, a little more correctly, the events which had been indistinctly seen from the window of the royal apartments, and yet more indistinctly reported by those who witnessed them. The glee-maiden, already mentioned, had planted herself, where a rise of two large broad steps, giving access to the main gateway of the royal apartments, gained her an advantage of a foot and a half in height over those in the court, of whom she hoped to form an audience. She wore the dress of her calling, which was more gaudy than rich, and showed the person more than did the garb of other females. She had laid aside an upper

mantle, and a small basket which contained her slender stock of necessaries, and a little French spaniel dog sat beside them, as their protector. An azure-blue jacket, embroidered with silver, and sitting close to the person, was open in front, and showed several waistcoats of different-coloured silks, calculated to set off the symmetry of the shoulders and bosom, and remaining open at the throat. A small silver chain worn around her neck, involved itself amongst these brilliant-coloured waistcoats, and was again produced from them, to display a medal of the same metal, which intimated, in the name of some court or guild of minstrels, the degree she had taken in the Gay or Joyous Science. A small scrip, suspended over her shoulders by a blue silk ribband, hung on her left side.

Her sunny complexion, snow-white teeth, brilliant black eyes, and raven locks, marked her country lying far in the south of France, and the arch smile and dimpled chin bore the same character. Her luxuriant locks, twisted around a small gold bodkin, were kept in their position by a net of silk and gold.

Short petticoats, deep-laced with silver, to correspond with the jacket, red stockings which were visible to near the calf of the leg, and buskins of Spanish leather, completed her adjustment, which, though far from new, had been saved as an untarnished holiday suit, which much care had kept in good order. She seemed about twenty-five years old; but perhaps fatigue and wandering had anticipated the touch of time, in obliterating the freshness of early youth.

We have said the glee-maiden's manner was lively, and we may add, that her smile and repartee were ready. But her gaiety was assumed, as a quality essentially necessary to her trade, of which it was one of the miseries, that the professors were obliged frequently to cover an aching heart with a compelled smile. This seemed to be the case with Louise, who, whether she was actually the heroine of her own song, or whatever other cause she might have for sadness, showed at times a strain of deep melancholy thought, which interfered with and controlled the natural flow of lively spirits, which the practice of the Joyous Science espe-

cially required. She lacked also, even in her gayest sallies, the decided boldness and effrontery of her sisterhood, who were seldom at a loss to retort a saucy jest, or turn the laugh against any who interrupted or interfered with them.

It may be here remarked, that it was impossible that this class of women, very numerous in that age, could bear a character generally respectable. They were, however, protected by the manners of the time; and such were the immunities they possessed by the rights of chivalry, that nothing was more rare than to hear of such errant damsels sustaining injury or wrong, and they passed and repassed safely, where armed travellers would probably have encountered a bloody opposition. But though licensed and protected in honour of their tuneful art, the wandering minstrels, male or female, like similar ministers to the public amusement, the itinerant musicians, for instance, and strolling comedians of our own day, led a life too irregular and precarious, to be accounted a creditable part of society. Indeed among

the stricter Catholics the profession was considered as unlawful.

Such was the damsel, who, with viol in hand, and stationed on the slight elevation we have mentioned, stepped forward to the by-standers, and announced herself as a mistress of the gay science, duly qualified by a brief from a Court of Love and Music held at Aix, in Provence, under the countenance of the flower of chivalry, the gallant Count Aymer; who now prayed that the cavaliers of merry Scotland, who were known over the wide world for bravery and courtesy, would permit a poor stranger to try whether she could afford them any amusement by her art. The love of song was like the love of fight, a common passion of the age, which all at least affected, whether they actually possessed it or no; therefore the acquiescence in Louise's proposal was universal. At the same time, an aged, dark-browed monk who was among the by-standers, thought it necessary to remind the glee-maiden, that, since she was tolerated within these precincts, which was an unusual grace, he trusted nothing would be sung

or said inconsistent with the holy character of the place.

The glee-maiden bent her head low, shook her sable locks, and crossed herself reverentially, as if she disclaimed the possibility of such a transgression, and then began the song of Poor Louise, which we gave at length in the last chapter.

Just as she commenced, she was stopped by a cry for "Room—room—place for the Duke of Rothsay!"

"Nay, hurry no man on my score," said a gallant young cavalier, who entered on a noble Arabian horse, which he managed with exquisite grace, though by such slight handling of the reins, such imperceptible pressure of the limbs and sway of the body, that to any eye save that of an experienced horseman, the animal seemed to be putting forth his paces for his own amusement, and thus gracefully bearing forward a rider who was too indolent to give himself any trouble about the matter.

The Prince's apparel, which was very rich, was put on with slovenly carelessness. His

form, though his stature was low, and his limbs extremely slight, was elegant in the extreme; and his features no less handsome. But there was on his brow a haggard paleness, which seemed the effect of care or of dissipation, or of both these wasting causes combined. His eyes were sunk and dim, as from late indulgence in revelry on the preceding evening, while his cheek was inflamed with unnatural red, as if either the effect of the Bacchanalian orgies had not passed away from the constitution, or a morning draught had been resorted to, in order to remove the effects of the night's debauchery.

Such was the Duke of Rothsay, and heir of the Scottish crown, a sight at once of interest and compassion. All unbonneted, and made way for him, while he kept repeating carelessly, "No haste—no haste—I shall arrive soon enough at the place I am bound for.—How's this—a damsel of the joyous science? Ay, by St Giles! and a comely wench to boot. Stand still, my merry men; never was minstrelsy marred for me.—A good voice, by the mass! Begin me that lay again, sweetheart."

Louise did not know the person who addressed her; but the general respect paid by all around, and the easy and indifferent manner in which it was received, showed her she was addressed by a man of the highest quality. She recommenced her lay, and sung her best accordingly; while the young Duke seemed thoughtful and rather affected towards the close of the ditty. But it was not his habit to cherish such melancholy affections. "This is a plaintive ditty, my nut-brown maid," said he, chucking the retreating glee-maiden under the chin, and detaining her by the collar of her dress, which was not difficult, as he sat on horseback so close to the steps on which she stood. "But I warrant me you have livelier notes at will, *ma bella tenebrosa;* ay, and canst sing in bower as well as wold, and by night as well as day."

"I am no nightingale, my lord," said Louise, endeavouring to escape a species of gallantry which ill-suited the place and circumstances, a discrepancy to which he who addressed it to her seemed contemptuously indifferent.

"What hast thou there, darling?" he added, removing his hold from her collar, to the scrip which she carried.

Glad was Louise to escape his grasp, by slipping the knot of the ribband, and leaving the little bag in the Prince's hand, as, retiring back beyond his reach, she answered, "Nuts, my lord, of the last season."

The Prince pulled out a handful of nuts accordingly. "Nuts, child!—they will break thine ivory teeth—hurt thy pretty voice," said Rothsay, cracking one with his teeth, like a village schoolboy.

"They are not the walnuts of my own sunny clime, my lord," said Louise; "but they hang low, and are within the reach of the poor."

"You shall have something to give you better fare, poor wandering ape," said the Duke, in a tone in which feeling predominated more than in the affected and contemptuous gallantry of his first address to the glee-maiden.

At this moment, as he turned to ask an at-

tendant for his purse, the Prince encountered the stern and piercing look of a tall black man, seated on a powerful iron-grey horse, who had entered with attendants while the Duke of Rothsay was engaged with Louise, and now remained stupified and almost turned to stone by his surprise and anger, at this unseemly spectacle. Even one who had never seen the Black Douglas, must have known him by his swart complexion, his gigantic frame, his buff-coat of bull's-hide, and his air of courage, firmness, and sagacity, mixed with the most indomitable pride. The loss of an eye in battle, though not perceptible at first sight, as the ball of the injured organ remained similar to the other, gave yet a stern immovable glare to the whole aspect.

The meeting of the royal son-in-law with his terrible step-father, was in circumstances which arrested the attention of all present; and the by-standers waited the issue with silence and suppressed breath, lest they should lose any part of what was to ensue.

When the Duke of Rothsay saw the expression which occupied the stern features of Dou-

glas, and remarked that the Earl did not make the least motion towards respectful, or even civil salutation, he seemed determined to show him how little respect he was disposed to pay to his displeased looks. He took his purse from his chamberlain.

"Here, pretty one," he said, "I give thee one gold piece for the song thou hast sung me, another for the nuts I have stolen from thee, and a third for the kiss thou art about to give me. For know, my pretty one, that when fair lips (and thine for fault of better may be called so) make sweet music for my pleasure, I am sworn to St Valentine to press them to mine."

"My song is recompensed nobly—" said Louise, shrinking back; "my nuts are sold to a good market—farther traffic, my lord, were neither befitting you nor beseeming me."

"What! you coy it, my nymph of the highway?" said the Prince, contemptuously. "Know, damsel, that one asks you a grace who is unused to denial."

"It is the Prince of Scotland"—"the Duke

of Rothsay,"—said the courtiers around, to the terrified Louise, pressing forward the trembling young woman; "you must not thwart his humour."

"But I cannot reach your lordship," she said, "you sit so high on horseback."

"If I must alight," said Rothsay, "there shall be the heavier penalty—What does the wench tremble for? Place thy foot on the toe of my boot, give me hold of thy hand—Gallantly done!" He kissed her as she stood thus suspended in the air, perched upon his foot, and supported by his hand; saying, "There is thy kiss, and there is my purse to pay it; and to grace thee farther, Rothsay will wear thy scrip for the day." He suffered the frightened girl to spring to the ground, and turned his looks from her to bend them contemptuously on the Earl of Douglas, as if he had said, "All this I do in despite of you and of your daughter's claims."

"By St Bride of Douglas!" said the Earl, pressing towards the Prince, "this is too much, unmannered boy, as void of sense as honour! You know what considerations restrain the hand of Douglas, else had you never dared——"

"Can you play at spang-cockle, my lord?" said the Prince, placing a nut on the second joint of his forefinger, and spinning it off by a smart application of the thumb. The nut struck on Douglas's broad breast, who burst out into a dreadful exclamation of wrath, inarticulate, but resembling the growl of a lion in depth and sternness of expression. "I cry your pardon, most mighty lord," said the Duke of Rothsay, scornfully, while all around trembled; "I did not conceive my pellet could have wounded you, seeing you wear a buff-coat. Surely, I trust, it did not hit your eye?"

The Prior, dispatched by the King, as we have seen in the last chapter, had by this time made way through the crowd, and laying hold on Douglas's rein, in a manner that made it impossible for him to advance, reminded him that the Prince was the son of his Sovereign, and the husband of his daughter.

"Fear not, Sir Prior," said Douglas. "I despise the childish boy too much to raise a finger against him. But I will return insult for insult.—Here, any of you who love the Douglas,

—spurn me this quean from the Monastery gates; and let her be so scourged that she may bitterly remember to the last day of her life, how she gave means to an unrespective boy to affront the Douglas!"

Four or five retainers instantly stepped forth to execute commands which were seldom uttered in vain, and heavily would Louise have atoned for an offence of which she was alike the innocent, unconscious, and unwilling instrument, had not the Duke of Rothsay interfered.

"Spurn the poor glee-woman?" he said, in high indignation; "scourge her for obeying my commands?—Spurn thine own oppressed vassals, rude Earl—scourge thine own faulty hounds—but beware how you touch so much as a dog that Rothsay hath patted on the head, far less a female whose lips he hath kissed!"

Before Douglas could give an answer, which would certainly have been in defiance, there arose that great tumult at the outward gate of the Monastery, already noticed, and men both on horseback and on foot began to rush head-

long in, not actually fighting with each other, but certainly in no peaceable manner.

The contending parties, seemingly, were partizans of Douglas, known by the cognizance of the Bloody Heart, and citizens of the town of Perth. It appeared they had been skirmishing in earnest when without the gates, but, out of respect to the sanctified ground, they lowered their weapons when they entered, and confined their strife to a war of words and mutual abuse.

The tumult had this good effect, that it forced asunder, by the weight and press of numbers, the Prince and Douglas, at a moment when the levity of the former, and the pride of the latter, were urging them to the utmost extremity. But now peace-makers interfered on all sides. The Prior and the monks threw themselves among the multitude, and commanded peace in the name of Heaven, and reverence to their sacred walls, under penalty of excommunication; and their expostulations began to be listened to. Albany, who was dispatched by his royal brother at the beginning of the fray, had not arrived till now on the scene of action. He

instantly applied himself to Douglas, and in his ear conjured him to temper his passion.

"By St Bride of Douglas, I will be avenged!" said the Earl. "No man shall brook life after he has passed an affront on Douglas."

"Why so you may be avenged in fitting time," said Albany; "but let it not be said, that, like a peevish woman, the Great Douglas could choose neither time nor place for his vengeance. Bethink you, all that we have laboured at is like to be upset by an accident. George of Dunbar hath had the advantage of an audience with the old man; and though it lasted but five minutes, I fear it may endanger the dissolution of your family match, which we brought about with so much difficulty. The authority from Rome has not yet been obtained."

"A toy!" answered Douglas, haughtily,—"they dare not dissolve it."

"Not while Douglas is at large, and in possession of his power," answered Albany. "But, noble Earl, come with me, and I will show you at what disadvantage you stand."

Douglas dismounted, and followed his wily accomplice in silence. In a lower hall they saw

the ranks of the Brandanes drawn up, well-armed in caps of steel and shirts of mail. Their captain, making an obeisance to Albany, seemed to desire to address him.

"What now, MacLouis?" said the Duke.

"We are informed the Duke of Rothsay has been insulted, and I can scarce keep the Brandanes within door."

"Gallant MacLouis," said Albany, "and you, my trusty Brandanes, the Duke of Rothsay, my princely nephew, is as well as a hopeful gentleman can be. Some scuffle there has been, but all is appeased." He continued to draw the Earl of Douglas forward. "You see, my lord," he said in his ear, "that if the word *arrest* was to be once spoken, it would be soon obeyed, and you are aware your attendants are few for resistance."

Douglas seemed to acquiesce in the necessity of patience for the time. "If my teeth," he said, "should bite through my lips, I will be silent till it is the hour to speak out."

George of March, in the meanwhile, had a more easy task of pacifying the Prince. "My

Lord of Rothsay," he said, approaching him with grave ceremony, " I need not tell you that you owe me something for reparation of honour, though I blame not you personally for the breach of contract which has destroyed the peace of my family. Let me conjure you by what observance your Highness may owe an injured man, to forego for the present this scandalous dispute."

" My lord, I owe you much," replied Rothsay ; " but this haughty and all-controlling lord has wounded mine honour."

" My lord, I can but add, your royal father is ill—hath swooned with terror for your Highness's safety."

" Ill !—the kind, good old man—swooned, said you, my Lord of March ?—I am with him in an instant."

The Duke of Rothsay sprung from his saddle to the ground, and was dashing into the palace like a greyhound, when a feeble grasp was laid on his cloak, and the faint voice of a kneeling female exclaimed, " Protection, my noble Prince !—Protection for a helpless stranger !"

"Hands off, stroller!" said the Earl of March, thrusting the suppliant glee-maiden aside.

But the gentler Prince paused. "It is true," he said, "I have brought the vengeance of an unforgiving devil upon this helpless creature. O heaven! what a life is mine, so fatal to all who approach me!—What to do in the hurry?—She must not go to my apartments—And all my men are such born reprobates.—Ha! thou at mine elbow, honest Harry Smith? What dost thou here?"

"There has been something of a fight, my lord," answered our acquaintance the Smith, "between the townsmen and the Southland loons who ride with the Douglas; and we have swinged them as far as the Abbey-Gate."

"I am glad of it—I am glad of it. And you beat the knaves fairly?"

"Fairly, does your Highness ask?" said Henry. "Why, ay! We were stronger in numbers, to be sure; but no men ride better armed than those who follow the Bloody Heart. And so in a sense we beat them fairly; for as your Highness knows, it is the Smith who makes the

men-at-arms, and men with good weapons are a match for great odds."

While they thus talked, the Earl of March, who had spoken with some one near the palace gate, returned in anxious haste. "My Lord Duke!—My Lord Duke!—Your father is recovered, and if you haste not speedily, my Lord of Albany and the Douglas will have possession of his royal ear."

"And if my royal father is recovered," said the thoughtless Prince, "and is holding, or about to hold, council with my gracious uncle and the Earl of Douglas, it befits neither your lordship nor me to intrude till we are summoned. So there is time for me to speak of my little business with mine honest armourer here."

"Does your Highness take it so?" said the Earl, whose sanguine hopes of a change of favour at court had been too hastily excited, and were as speedily checked,—"Then so let it be for George of Dunbar."

He glided away with a gloomy and displeased aspect; and thus out of the two most powerful noblemen in Scotland, at a time when the aristo-

cracy so closely controlled the throne, the reckless heir-apparent had made two enemies; the one by scornful defiance, and the other by careless neglect. He heeded not the Earl of March's departure, however, or rather he felt relieved from his importunity.

The Prince went on in indolent conversation with our armourer, whose skill in his art had made him known to many of the great lords about the court.

"I had something to say to thee, Smith—Canst thou take up a fallen link in my Milan hauberk?"

"As well, please your Highness, as my mother could take up a stitch in the nets she wove—The Milaner shall not know my work from his own."

"Well, but that was not what I wished of thee just now," said the Prince, recollecting himself; "this poor glee-woman, good Smith, she must be placed in safety. Thou art man enough to be any woman's champion, and thou must conduct her to some place of safety."

Henry Smith was, as we have seen, suffici-

ently rash and daring when weapons were in question. But he had also the pride of a decent burgher, and was unwilling to place himself in what might be thought equivocal circumstances by the sober part of his fellow-citizens.

"May it please your Highness," he said, "I am but a poor craftsman. But though my arm and sword are at the King's service, and your Highness's, I am, with reverence, no squire of dames. Your Highness will find, among your own retinue, knights and lords willing enough to play Sir Pandarus of Troy—it is too knightly a part for poor Hal of the Wynd."

"Umph—hah!"—said the Prince. "My purse, Edgar—(his attendant whispered him) —True, true, I gave it to the poor wench.—I know enough of your craft, and of craftsmen in general, to be aware that men lure not hawks with empty hands; but I suppose my word may pass for the price of a good armour, and I will pay it thee with thanks to boot, for this slight service."

"Your Highness may know other craftsmen," said the Smith; "but, with reverence,

you know not Henry Gow. He will obey you in making a weapon, or in welding one, but he knows nothing of this petticoat service."

"Hark thee, thou Perthshire mule," said the Prince, yet smiling, while he spoke, at the sturdy punctilio of the honest burgher,—"the wench is as little to me as she is to thee. But in an idle moment, as you may learn from those about thee, if thou sawest it not thyself, I did her a passing grace, which is likely to cost the poor wretch her life. There is no one here whom I can trust to protect her against the discipline of belt and bowstring, with which the Border brutes who follow Douglas will beat her to death, since such is his pleasure."

"If such be the case, my liege, she has a right to every honest man's protection; and since she wears a petticoat,—though I would it were longer, and of a less fanciful fashion,—I will answer for her protection as well as a single man may. But where am I to bestow her?"

"Good faith, I cannot tell," said the Prince. "Take her to Sir John Ramorny's lodging—

But, no—no—he is ill at ease, and besides, there are reasons—take her to the devil if thou wilt, but place her in safety, and oblige Robin of Rothsay."

"My noble Prince," said the Smith, "I think —always with reverence—that I would rather give a defenceless woman to the care of the devil than of Sir John Ramorny. But though the devil be a worker in fire like myself, yet I know not his haunts, and with aid of Holy Church hope to keep him on terms of defiance. And, moreover, how I am to convey her out of this crowd, or through the streets, in such a mumming habit, may be well made a question."

"For the leaving the convent," said the Prince, "this good monk (seizing upon the nearest by his cowl,) Father Nicholas or Boniface——"

"Poor brother Cyprian, at your Highness's command," said the father.

"Ay, ay, brother Cyprian," continued the Prince, "yes. Brother Cyprian shall let you out at some secret passage which he knows of, and I will see him again to pay a Prince's thanks for it."

The churchman bowed in acquiescence, and poor Louise, who, during this debate, had looked from the one speaker to the other, hastily said, " I will not scandalize this good man with my foolish garb—I have a mantle for ordinary wear."

" Why, there, Smith, thou hast a friar's hood and a woman's mantle to shroud thee under. I would all my frailties were as well shrouded! Farewell, honest fellow; I will thank thee hereafter."

Then, as if afraid of farther objection on the Smith's part, he hastened into the palace.

Henry Gow remained stupified at what had passed, and at finding himself involved in a charge at once inferring much danger, and an equal risk of scandal, both which, joined to a principal share which he had taken, with his usual forwardness, in the fray, might, he saw, do him no small injury in the suit he pursued most anxiously. At the same time, to leave a defenceless creature to the ill usage of the barbarous Galwegians, and licentious followers of the Douglas, was a thought which his manly heart could not brook for an instant.

He was roused from his reverie by the voice of the Monk, who, sliding out his words with the indifference which the holy fathers entertained, or affected, towards all temporal matters, desired them to follow him. The Smith put himself in motion, with a sigh much resembling a groan, and, without appearing exactly connected with the Monk's motions, he followed him into a cloister, and through a postern door, which, after looking once behind him, the priest left ajar. Behind them followed Louise, who had hastily assumed her small bundle, and, calling her little four-legged companion, had eagerly followed in the path which opened an escape from what had shortly before seemed a great and inevitable danger.

CHAPTER XI.

The party were now, by a secret passage, admitted within the church, the outward doors of which, usually left open, had been closed against every one in consequence of the recent tumult, when the rioters of both parties had endeavoured to rush into it for other purposes than those of devotion. They traversed the gloomy aisles, whose arched roof resounded to the heavy tread of the armourer, but was silent under the sandal'd foot of the Monk, and the light step of poor Louise, who trembled excessively, as much from fear as cold. She saw that neither her spiritual nor temporal conductor looked kindly upon her. The former was an austere man, whose aspect seemed to

hold the luckless wanderer in some degree of horror, as well as contempt; while the latter, though, as we have seen, one of the best natured men living, was at present grave to the pitch of sternness, and not a little displeased with having the part he was playing forced upon him, without, as he was constrained to feel, a possibility of his declining it.

His dislike at his task extended itself to the innocent object of his protection, and he internally said to himself, as he surveyed her scornfully,—"A proper queen of beggars to walk the streets of Perth with, and I a decent burgher! This tawdry minion must have as ragged a reputation as the rest of her sisterhood, and I am finely sped if my chivalry in her behalf comes to Catharine's ears. I had better have slain a man, were he the best in Perth; and, by hammer and nails! I would have done it on provocation, rather than convoy this baggage through the city."

Perhaps Louise suspected the cause of her conductor's anxiety, for she said, timidly and

with hesitation, "Worthy sir, were it not better I should stop one instant in that chapel, and don my mantle?"

"Umph, sweetheart, well proposed," said the armourer; but the Monk interfered, raising at the same time, the finger of interdiction.

"The Chapel of Holy St Madox is no tyring room for vile jugglers and strollers to shift their trappings in. I will presently show thee a vestiary more suited to thy condition."

The poor young woman hung down her humbled head, and turned from the chapel door which she had approached, with the deep sense of self-abasement. Her little spaniel seemed to gather from his mistress's looks and manner, that they were unauthorized intruders on the holy ground which they trode, and hung his ears, and swept the pavement with his tail, as he trotted slowly and close to Louise's heels.

The Monk moved on without a pause. They descended a broad flight of steps, and proceeded through a labyrinth of subterranean pas-

sages, dimly lighted. As they passed a low-arched door, the Monk turned, and said to Louise, with the same stern voice as before,—"There, daughter of folly, there is a robing-room, where many before you have deposited their vestments!"

Obeying the least signal with ready and timorous acquiescence, she pushed the door open, but instantly recoiled with terror. It was a charnel-house, half filled with dry skulls and bones.

"I fear to change my dress there, and alone—But if you, father, command it, be it as you will."

"Why, thou child of vanity, the remains on which thou lookest are but the earthly attire of those who, in their day, led or followed in the pursuit of worldly pleasure. And such shalt thou be, for all thy mincing and ambling, thy piping and thy harping; thou, and all such ministers of frivolous and worldly pleasure, must become like these poor bones, whom thy idle nicety fears and loaths to look upon."

"Say not with idle nicety, reverend father," answered the glee-maiden, "for Heaven knows, I covet the repose of these poor bleached relics; and if by stretching my body upon them, I could, without sin, bring my state to theirs, I would choose that charnel heap for my place of rest, beyond the fairest and softest couch in Scotland."

"Be patient, and come on," said the Monk, in a milder tone; "the reaper must not leave the harvest-work till the sunset gives the signal."

They walked forward. Brother Cyprian, at the end of a long gallery, opened the door of a small apartment, or perhaps a chapel, for it was decorated with a crucifix, before which burned four lamps. All bent and crossed themselves; and the priest said to the minstrel maiden, pointing to the crucifix, "What says that emblem?"

"That He invites the sinner as well as the righteous to approach."

"Ay, if the sinner put from him his sin," said the Monk, whose tone of voice was evidently milder. "Prepare thyself here for thy journey."

Louise remained an instant or two in the chapel, and presently reappeared in a mantle of coarse grey cloth, in which she had closely muffled herself, having put such of her more gawdy habiliments as she had time to take off, in the little basket which had before held her ordinary attire.

The Monk presently afterwards unlocked a door which led to the open air. They found themselves in the garden which surrounded the monastery of the Dominicans. "The southern gate is on the latch, and through it you can pass unnoticed," said the Monk. "Bless thee, my son; and bless thee too, unhappy child. Remembering where you put off your idle trinkets, may you take care how you again resume them!"

"Alas, father!" said Louise, "if the poor foreigner could supply the mere wants of life by any more creditable occupation, she has small wish to profess her idle art. But——"

But the Monk had vanished, nay, the very door through which she had just passed appeared to have vanished also, so curiously was it concealed beneath a flying buttress, and among the profuse ornaments of Gothic architecture.

"Here is a woman let out by this private postern, sure enough," was Henry's reflection. "Pray Heaven the good fathers never let any in! The place seems convenient for such games at bo-peep.—But, benedicite, what is to be done next? I must get rid of this quean as fast as I can; and I must see her safe. For let her be at heart what she may, she looks too modest, now she is in decent dress, to deserve the usage which the wild Scot of Galloway, or the Devil's legion from the Liddell, are like to afford her."

Louise stood as if she waited his pleasure which way to go. Her little dog, relieved by the exchange of the dark subterranean vault for the open air, sprung in wild gambols through the walks, and jumped upon its mistress; and even, though more timidly, circled close round the Smith's feet, to express its satisfaction to him also, and conciliate his favour.

"Down, Charlot, down!" said the glee-maiden. "You are glad to get into the blessed sunshine; but where shall we rest at night, my poor Charlot?"

"And now, mistress," said the Smith,—not churlishly, for it was not in his nature, but

bluntly, as one who is desirous to finish a disagreeable employment,—" which way lies your road ?"

Louise looked on the ground, and was silent. On being again urged to say which way she desired to be conducted, she again looked down, and said, she could not tell.

" Come, come," said Henry, " I understand all that—I have been a *galliard*—a reveller in my day—but it's best to be plain. As matters are with me now, I am an altered man for these many, many months; and so, my quean, you and I must part sooner than perhaps a light o' love such as you expected to part with—a likely young fellow."

Louise wept silently, with her eyes still cast on the ground, as one who felt an insult which she had not a right to complain of. At length, perceiving that her conductor was grown impatient, she faltered out, " Noble sir—"

" *Sir* is for a knight," said the impatient burgher, " and *noble* is for a baron. I am Harry of the Wynd, an honest mechanic, and free of my guild."

"Good craftsman, then," said the minstrel woman, "you judge me harshly, but not without seeming cause. I would relieve you immediately of my company, which, it may be, brings little credit to good men, did I but know which way to go."

"To the next wake or fair, to be sure," said Henry, roughly, having no doubt that this distress was affected for the purpose of palming herself upon him, and perhaps dreading to throw himself into the way of temptation; "and that is the feast of St Madox, at Auchterarder. I warrant thou wilt find the way thither well enough."

"Aftr—Auchter—" repeated the glee-maiden, her southern tongue in vain attempting the Celtic accentuation. "I am told my poor lays will not be understood if I go nearer to yon dreadful range of mountains."

"Will you abide, then, in Perth?"

"But where to lodge?" said the wanderer.

"Why, where lodged you last night?" replied the Smith. "You know where you came from surely, though you seem doubtful where you are going?"

"I slept in the hospital of the Convent. But I was only admitted upon great importunity, and I was commanded not to return."

"Nay, they will never take you in with the brand of the Douglas upon you, that is even too true. But the Prince mentioned Sir John Ramorny's—I can take you to his lodgings through by-streets—though it is short of an honest burgher's office, and my time presses."

"I will go anywhere—I know I am a scandal and incumbrance. There was a time when it was otherwise—But this Ramorny, who is he?"

"A courtly knight, who lives a jolly bachelor's life, and is Master of the Horse, and privado, as they say, to the young Prince."

"What! to the wild, scornful young man who gave occasion to yonder scandal?—Oh, take me not thither, good friend! Is there no Christian woman, who would give a poor creature rest in her cow-house, or barn, for one night? I will be gone with early daybreak. I will repay her richly. I have gold—and I will repay you too, if you will take me where I may be safe from

that wild reveller, and from the followers of that dark Baron, in whose eye was death."

"Keep your gold for those who lack it, mistress," said Henry, "and do not offer to honest hands the money that is won by violing, and tabouring, and toe-tripping, and perhaps worse pastimes. I tell you plainly, mistress, I am not to be fooled. I am ready to take you to any place of safety you can name, for my promise is as strong as an iron shackle. But you cannot persuade me that you do not know what earth to make for. You are not so young in your trade as not to know there are hostelries in every town, much more in a city like Perth, where such as you may be harboured for your money, if you cannot find some gulls, more or fewer, to pay your lawing. If you have money, mistress, my care about you need be the less; and truly I see little but pretence in all that excessive grief, and fear of being left alone, in one of your occupation."

Having thus, as he conceived, signified that he was not to be deceived by the ordinary arts of a glee-maiden, Henry walked a few paces

sturdily, endeavouring to think he was doing the wisest and most prudent thing in the world. Yet he could not help looking back to see how Louise bore his departure, and was shocked to observe that she had sunk upon a bank, with her arms resting on her knees, and her head on her arms, in a situation expressive of the utmost desolation.

The Smith tried to harden his heart. "It is all a sham," he said; "the gouge* knows her trade—I'll be sworn, by Saint Ringan."

At the instant, something pulled the skirts of his cloak; and, looking round, he saw the little spaniel, who immediately, as if to plead his mistress's cause, got on his hind legs and began to dance, whimpering at the same time, and looking back to Louise, as if to solicit compassion for his forsaken owner.

"Poor thing," said the Smith, "there may be a trick in this too, for thou dost but as thou art taught.—Yet, as I promised to protect this

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* Gouge, in old French, is almost equivalent to wench.

poor creature, I must not leave her in a swoon, if it be one, were it but for manhood's sake."

Returning and approaching his troublesome charge, he was at once assured, from the change of her complexion, either that she was actually in the deepest distress, or had a power of dissimulation beyond the comprehension of man—or woman either.

"Young woman," he said, with more of kindness than he had hitherto been able even to assume, "I will tell you frankly how I am placed. This is St Valentine's Day, and by custom, I was to spend it with my fair Valentine. But blows and quarrels have occupied all the morning, save one poor half hour. Now, you may well understand where my heart and my thoughts are, and where, were it only in mere courtesy, my body ought to be."

The glee-maiden listened, and appeared to comprehend him.

"If you are a true lover, and have to wait upon a chaste Valentine, God forbid that one like me should make a disturbance between you! Think about me no more. I will ask of

that great river to be my guide to where it meets the ocean, where I think they said there was a seaport; I will sail from thence to La Belle France, and will find myself once more in a country, in which the roughest peasant would not wrong the poorest female."

"You cannot go to Dundee to-day," said the Smith. "The Douglas's people are in motion on both sides of the river, for the alarm of the morning has reached them ere now; and all this day, and the next, and the whole night which is between, they will gather to their leader's standard, like Highlandmen at the fiery cross. Do you see yonder five or six men, who are riding so wildly on the other side of the river? These are Annandale men; I know them by the length of their lances, and by the way they hold them. An Annandale man never slopes his spear backwards, but always keeps the point upright, or pointed forward."

"And what of them?" said the glee-maiden. "They are men-at-arms and soldiers—They would respect me for my viol and my helplessness."

"I will say them no scandal," answered the Smith. "If you were in their own glens, they would use you hospitably, and you would have nothing to fear; but they are now on an expedition. All is fish that comes to their net. There are amongst them who would take your life for the value of your gold ear-rings. Their whole soul is settled in their eyes to see prey, and in their hands to grasp it. They have no ears either to hear lays of music, or listen to prayers for mercy. Besides, their leader's order is gone forth concerning you, and it is of a kind sure to be obeyed. Ay, great lords are sooner listened to if they say, 'Burn a church,' than if they say, 'Build one.'"

"Then," said the glee-woman, "I were best sit down and die."

"Do not say so," replied the Smith. "If I could but get you a lodging for the night, I would carry you the next morning to Our Lady's Stairs, from whence the vessels go down the river for Dundee, and would put you on board with some one bound that way, who should see you safely lodged where you would have fair entertainment and kind usage."

"Good—excellent—generous man!" said the glee-maiden, "do this, and if the prayers and blessings of a poor unfortunate should ever reach Heaven, they will rise thither in thy behalf. We will meet at yonder postern door, at whatever time the boats take their departure."

"That is at six in the morning, when the day is but young."

"Away with you, then, to your Valentine; —and if she loves you, oh, deceive her not!"

"Alas, poor damsel! I fear it is deceit hath brought thee to this pass. But I must not leave you thus unprovided. I must know where you are to pass the night."

"Care not for that," replied Louise—"the heavens are clear—there are bushes and boskets enough by the river side; Charlot and I can well make a sleeping room of a green arbour for one night; and to-morrow will, with your promised aid, see me out of reach of injury and wrong. Oh, the night soon passes away when there is hope for to-morrow!—Do you still linger, with your Valentine waiting for you? Nay, I shall hold you but a loitering lover, and you know what belongs to a minstrel's reproaches."

"I cannot leave you, damsel," answered the armourer, now completely melted. "It were mere murder to suffer you to pass the night exposed to the keenness of a Scottish night in February. No, no—my word would be ill kept in this manner; and if I should incur some risk of blame, it is but just penance for thinking of thee, and using thee, more according to my own prejudices, as I now well believe, than thy merits. Come with me, damsel—thou shalt have a sure and honest lodging for the night, whatsoever may be the consequence. It would be an evil compliment to my Catharine, were I to leave a poor creature to be starved to death, that I might enjoy her company an hour sooner."

So saying, and hardening himself against all anticipations of the ill consequences or scandal which might arise from such a measure, the manly-hearted Smith resolved to set evil report at defiance, and give the wanderer a night's refuge in his own house. It must be added, that he did this with extreme reluctance, and in a sort of enthusiasm of benevolence.

Ere our stout son of Vulcan had fixed his

worship on the Fair Maid of Perth, a certain wildness of disposition had placed him under the influence of Venus, as well as that of Mars; and it was only the effect of a sincere attachment which had withdrawn him entirely from such licentious pleasures. He was therefore justly jealous of his newly-acquired reputation for constancy, which his conduct to this poor wanderer must expose to suspicion—a little doubtful, perhaps, of exposing himself too venturously to temptation—and moreover in despair to lose so much of St Valentine's Day, which custom not only permitted, but enjoined him to pass beside his mate for the season. The journey to Kinfauns, and the various transactions which followed, had consumed the day, and it was now nearly even-song time.

As if to make up by a speedy pace for the time he was compelled to waste upon a subject so foreign to that which he had most at heart, he strode on through the Dominican's gardens, entered the town, and casting his cloak around the lower part of his face, and pulling down his bonnet to conceal the upper, he continued the

same celerity of movement through by-streets and lanes, hoping to reach his own house in the Wynd without being observed. But when he had continued his rate of walking for ten minutes, he began to be sensible it might be too rapid for the young woman to keep up with him. He accordingly looked behind him with a degree of angry impatience, which soon turned into compunction, when he saw that she was almost utterly exhausted by the speed which she had exerted.

"Now, marry, hang me up for a brute," said Henry to himself. "Was my own haste ever so great, could it give that poor creature wings? And she loaded with baggage too! I am an ill-nurtured beast, that is certain, wherever women are in question; and always sure to do wrong when I have the best will to act right.—Hark thee, damsel; let me carry these things for thee. We shall make better speed that I do so."

Poor Louise would have objected, but her breath was too much exhausted to express herself; and she permitted her good-natured guardian to take her little basket, which when the

dog beheld, he came straight before Henry, stood up, and shook his fore-paws, whining gently, as if he too wanted to be carried.

"Nay, then, I must needs lend thee a lift too," said the Smith, who saw the creature was tired.

"Fie, Charlot!" said Louise; "thou knowest I will carry thee myself."

She endeavoured to take up the little spaniel, but it escaped from her; and going to the other side of the Smith, renewed its supplications that he would take it up.

"Charlot's right," said the Smith; "he knows best who is ablest to bear him. This lets me know, my pretty one, that you have not been always the bearer of your own mail—Charlot can tell tales."

So deadly a hue came across the poor glee-maiden's countenance as Henry spoke, that he was obliged to support her, lest she should have dropped to the ground. She recovered again, however, in an instant or two, and with a feeble voice, requested her guide would go on.

"Nay, nay," said Henry, as they began to move, "keep hold of my cloak, or my arm, if

it helps you forward better. A fair sight we are; and had I but a rebeck or guitar at my back, and a jackanapes on my shoulder, we should seem as joyous a brace of strollers as ever touched string at a castle gate.—'Snails!" he ejaculated internally, " were any neighbour to meet me with this little harlotry's basket at my back, her dog under my arm, and herself hanging on my cloak, what could they think but that I had turned mumper in good earnest? I would not for the best harness I ever laid hammer on, that any of our long-tongued neighbours met me in this guise; it were a jest would last from St Valentine's Day to next Candlemas."

Stirred by these thoughts, the Smith, although at the risk of making much longer a route which he wished to traverse as swiftly as possible, took the most indirect and private course which he could find in order to avoid the main streets, still crowded with people, owing to the late scene of tumult and agitation. But unhappily his policy availed him nothing; for in turning into an alley, he met a man with his

cloak muffled around his face, from a desire like his own to pass unobserved, though the slight insignificant figure, the spindle-shanks, which showed themselves beneath the mantle, and the small dull eye that blinked over its upper folds, announced the Pottingar as distinctly as if he had carried his sign in front of his bonnet. His unexpected and most unwelcome presence overwhelmed the Smith with confusion. Ready evasion was not the property of his bold, blunt temper; and knowing this man to be a curious observer, a malignant tale-bearer, and by no means well disposed to himself in particular, no better hope occurred to him than that the worshipful apothecary would give him some pretext to silence his testimony, and secure his discretion, by twisting his neck round.

But far from doing or saying anything which could warrant such extremities, the Pottingar, seeing himself so close upon his stalwart townsman that recognition was inevitable, seemed determined it should be as slight as possible; and without appearing to notice anything particular in the company or circumstances in which they

met, he barely slid out these words as he passed him, without even a glance towards his companion after the first instant of their meeting, —" A merry holiday to you once more, stout Smith. What! thou art bringing thy cousin, pretty Mistress Joan Letham, with her mail, from the water-side—fresh from Dundee, I warrant? I heard she was expected at the old cordwainer's."

As he spoke thus, he looked neither right nor left, and exchanging a " Save you!" with a salute of the same kind which the Smith rather muttered than uttered distinctly, he glided forward on his way like a shadow.

" The foul fiend catch me, if I can swallow that pill," said Henry Smith, " how well soever it may be gilded. The knave has a shrewd eye for a kirtle, and knows a wild-duck from a tame, as well as e'er a man in Perth—He were the last in the Fair City to take sour plums for pears, or my round-about cousin Joan for this piece of fantastic vanity. I fancy his bearing was as much as to say, I will not see what you might wish me blind to—and he is

right to do so, as he might easily purchase himself a broken pate by meddling with my matters —and so he will be silent for his own sake. But whom have we next—By St Dunstan! the chattering, bragging, cowardly knave, Oliver Proudfute!"

It was, indeed, the bold Bonnet-maker whom they next encountered, who, with his cap on one side, and trolling the ditty of

"Thou art over long at the pot, Tom, Tom,"

gave plain intimation that he had made no dry meal.

"Ha! my jolly Smith," he said, "have I caught thee in the manner?—What, can the true steel bend?—Can Vulcan, as the minstrel says, pay Venus back in her own coin?—Faith, thou wilt be a gay Valentine before the year's out, that begins with the holiday so jollily."

"Hark ye, Oliver," said the displeased Smith, "shut your eyes and pass on, crony. And hark ye again, stir not your tongue about what concerns you not, as you value having an entire tooth in your head."

"I betray counsel?—I bear tales, and that against my brother martialist?—I scorn it—I would not tell it even to my timber Soldan!—Why, I can be a wild galliard in a corner as well as thou, man—And now I think on't, I will go with thee somewhere, and we will have a rouse together, and thy Dalilah shall give us a song. Ha! said I not well?"

"Excellently," said Henry, longing the whole time to knock his brother martialist down, but wisely taking a more peaceful way to rid himself of the incumbrance of his presence—"Excellently well!—I may want thy help too—for here are five or six of the Douglasses before us—they will not fail to try to take the wench from a poor burgher like myself, so I will be glad of the assistance of a tearer such as thou art."

"I thank ye—I thank ye," answered the Bonnet-maker; "but were I not better run, and cause ring the common bell, and get my great sword?"

"Ay, ay—run home as fast as you can, and say nothing of what you have seen."

"Who, I?—Nay, fear me not. Pah! I scorn a tale-bearer."

"Away with you, then;—I hear the clash of armour."

This put life and mettle into the heels of the Bonnet-maker, who, turning his back on the supposed danger, set off at a pace which the Smith never doubted would speedily bring him to his own house.

"Here is another chattering jay to deal with," thought the Smith; "but I have a hank over him too. The minstrels have a fabliau of a daw with borrowed feathers,—why, this Oliver is the very bird, and, by St Dunstan, if he lets his chattering tongue run on at my expense, I will so pluck him as never hawk plumed a partridge. And this he knows."

As these reflections thronged on his mind, he had nearly reached the end of his journey; and, with the glee-maiden still hanging on his cloak, exhausted, partly with fear, partly with fatigue, he at length arrived at the middle of the Wynd, which was honoured with his own habitation, and from which, in the uncertain-

ty that then attended the application of surnames, he derived one of his own appellatives. Here, on ordinary days, his furnace was seen to blaze, and four half-stripped knaves stunned the neighbourhood with the clang of hammer and stithy. But St Valentine's holiday was an excuse for these men of steel having shut the shop, and for the present being absent on their own errands of devotion or pleasure. The house which adjoined to the smithy called Henry its owner; and though it was small, and situated in a narrow street, yet, as there was a large garden with fruit trees behind it, it constituted upon the whole a pleasant dwelling. The Smith, instead of knocking or calling, which would have drawn neighbours to doors and windows, drew out a pass-key of his own fabrication, then a great and envied curiosity, and opening the door of his house, introduced his companion into his habitation.

The apartment which received Henry and the glee-maiden was the kitchen, which served amongst those of the Smith's station for the family sitting-room, although one or two indivi-

duals, like Simon Glover, had an eating-room apart from that in which their victuals were prepared. In the corner of this apartment, which was arranged with an unusual attention to cleanliness, sat an old woman, whose neatness of attire, and the precision with which her scarlet plaid was drawn over her head, so as to descend to her shoulders on each side, might have indicated a higher rank than that of Luckie Shoolbred, the Smith's housekeeper. Yet such and no other was her designation; and not having attended mass in the morning, she was quietly reposing herself by the side of the fire, her beads, half told, hanging over her left arm; her prayers, half said, loitering upon her tongue; her eyes, half closed, resigning themselves to slumber, while she expected the return of her foster-son, without being able to guess at what hour it was likely to happen. She started up at the sound of his entrance, and bent her eye upon his companion, at first with a look of the utmost surprise, which gradually was exchanged for one expressive of great displeasure.

"Now the Saints bless mine eye-sight, Henry Smith!—" she exclaimed, very devoutly.

"Amen, with all my heart. Get some food ready presently, good nurse, for I fear me this traveller hath dined but lightly."

"And again I pray that Our Lady would preserve my eyesight from the wicked delusions of Satan!"

"So be it, I tell you, good woman. But what is the use of all this pattering and prayering? Do you not hear me? or will you not do as I bid you?"

"It must be himself, then, whatever is of it! But oh! it is more like the foul Fiend in his likeness, to have such a baggage hanging upon his cloak.—O Harry Smith, men called you a wild lad for less things! But who would ever have thought that Harry would have brought a light leman under the roof that sheltered his worthy mother, and where his own nurse has dwelt for thirty years!"

"Hold your peace, old woman, and be reasonable," said the Smith. "This glee-woman

is no leman of mine, nor of any other person that I know of; but she is going off for Dundee to-morrow by the boats, and we must give her quarters till then."

"Quarters!" said the old woman. "You may give quarters to such cattle if you like it yourself, Harry Wynd; but the same house shall not quarter that trumpery quean and me, and of that you may assure yourself."

"Your mother is angry with me," said Louise, misconstruing the connexion of the parties. "I will not remain to give her any offence. If there is a stable or a cowhouse, an empty stall will be bed enough for Charlot and me."

"Ay, ay; I am thinking it is the quarters you are best used to," said Dame Shoolbred.

"Hark ye, Nurse Shoolbred," said the Smith. "You know I love you for your own sake, and for my mother's; but by St Dunstan, who was a saint of my own craft, I will have the command of my own house; and if you leave me without any better reason but your own nonsensical suspicions, you must think how you will have the door open to you when you re-

turn; for you shall have no help of mine, I promise you."

"Aweel, my bairn, and that will never make me risk the honest name I have kept for sixty years. It was never your mother's custom, and it shall never be mine, to take up with ranters, and jugglers, and singing women; and I am not so far to seek for a dwelling, that the same roof should cover me and a tramping princess like that."

With this the refractory gouvernante began in great hurry to adjust her tartan mantle for going abroad, by pulling it so far forwards as to conceal the white linen cap, the edges of which bordered her shrivelled but still fresh and healthful countenance. This done, she seized upon a staff, the trusty companion of her journeys, and was fairly trudging towards the door, when the Smith stepped between her and the passage.

"Wait at least, old woman, till we have cleared scores. I owe you for fee and bountith."

"An' that's e'en a dream of your own fool's

head. What fee or bountith am I to take from the son of your mother, that fed, clad, and bielded me as if I had been a sister?"

"And well you repay it, nurse, leaving her only child at his utmost need."

This seemed to strike the obstinate old woman with compunction. She stopped and looked at her master and the minstrel alternately; then shook her head, and seemed about to resume her motion towards the door.

"I only receive this poor wanderer under my roof," urged the Smith, "to save her from the prison and the scourge."

"And why should you save her?" said the inexorable Dame Shoolbred. "I dare say she has deserved them both as well as ever thief deserved a hempen collar."

"For aught I know she may, or she may not. But she cannot deserve to be scourged to death, or imprisoned till she is starved to death; and that is the lot of them that the Black Douglas bears maltalent against."

"And you are going to thraw the Black Douglas, for the sake of a glee-woman? This

will be the worst of your feuds yet.—Oh, Henry Gow, there is as much iron in your head as in your anvil!"

"I have sometimes thought this myself, Mistress Shoolbred; but if I do get a cut or two on this new argument, I wonder who is to cure them, if you run away from me like a scared wild-goose? Ay, and moreover, who is to receive my bonny bride, that I hope to bring up the Wynd one of these days?"

"Ah, Harry, Harry," said the old woman, shaking her head, "this is not the way to prepare an honest man's house for a young bride—you should be guided by modesty and discretion, and not by chambering and wantonness."

"I tell you again, this poor creature is nothing to me. I wish her only to be safely taken care of; and I think the boldest Borderman in Perth will respect the bar of my door as much as the gate of Carlisle Castle.—I am going down to Sim Glover's—I may stay there all night, for the Highland cub is run back to the hills, like a wolf-whelp as he is, and so there is a bed to

spare, and father Simon will make me welcome to the use of it. You will remain with this poor creature, feed her, and protect her during the night, and I will call on her before day; and thou mayst go with her to the boat thyself an thou wilt, and so thou wilt set the last eyes on her at the same time I shall."

"There is some reason in that," said Dame Shoolbred; "though why you should put your reputation in risk for a creature that would find a lodging for a silver twopence and less matter, is a mystery to me."

"Trust me with that, old woman, and be kind to the girl."

"Kinder than she deserves, I warrant you; and truly, though I little like the company of such cattle, yet I think I am less like to take harm from her than you—unless she be a witch, indeed, which may well come to be the case, as the devil is very powerful with all this wayfaring clanjamfray."

"No more a witch than I am a warlock," said the honest Smith; "a poor broken-hearted thing, that, if she hath done evil, has dreed a

sore weird for it. Be kind to her—And you, my musical damsel—I will call on you to-morrow morning, and carry you to the water-side. This old woman will treat you kindly, if you say nothing to her but what becomes honest ears."

The poor minstrel had listened to this dialogue, without understanding more than its general tendency; for, though she spoke English well, she had acquired the language in England itself, and the northern dialect was then, as now, of a broader and harsher character. She saw, however, that she was to remain with the old lady, and meekly folding her arms on her bosom, bent her head with humility. She next looked towards the Smith with a strong expression of thankfulness, then raising her eyes to heaven, took his passive hand, and seemed about to kiss the sinewy fingers, in token of deep and affectionate gratitude. But Dame Shoolbred did not give license to the stranger's mode of expressing her feelings. She thrust in between them, and pushing poor Louise aside, said, "No, no, I'll have none of that work. Go into

the chimney nook, mistress, and when Harry Smith's gone, if you must have hands to kiss, you shall kiss mine as long as you like.—And you, Harry, away down to Sim Glover's, for if pretty Mistress Catharine hears of the company you have brought home, she may chance to like them as little as I do.—What's the matter now?—is the man demented?—are you going out without your buckler, and the whole town in misrule?"

"You are right, dame," said the armourer; and throwing the buckler over his broad shoulders, he departed from his house without abiding farther question.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY BALLANTYNE AND CO.

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3 0112 040210863